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SUBSTANCE OF LECTURES ON SYSTEMATIC HOMILETICS

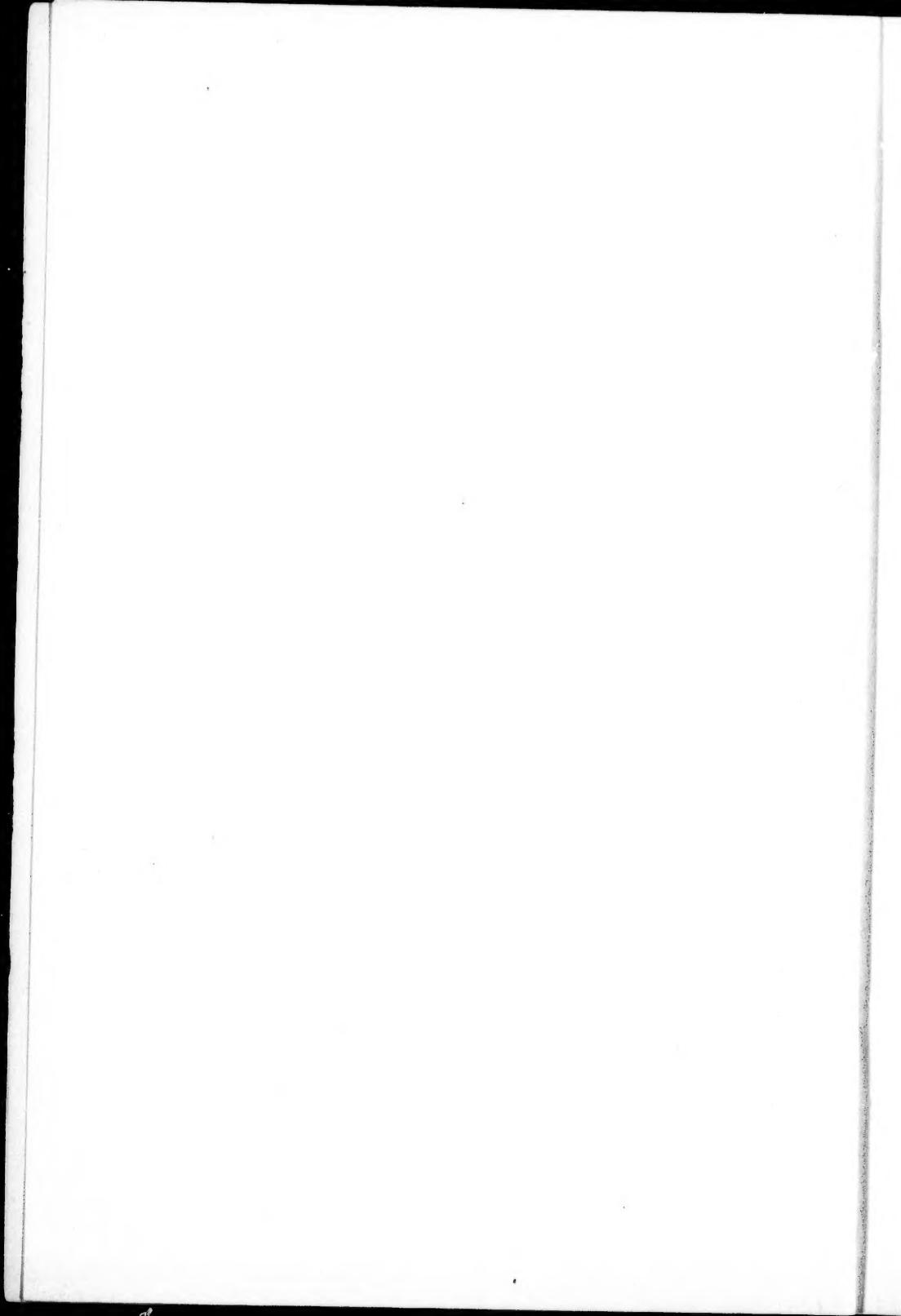
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BY
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SYSTEMATIC HOMILETICS.

IN rhetorical discourse two things are essential: the one is a practical end to be gained; the other is definite matter or a definite subject by the discussion or proof of which the practical end is to be gained. If the one be wanting, you will speak without a purpose; if the other be wanting, you will fail to accomplish your purpose.

I. We shall deal with the *subject* first, always keeping the end in view. The subject in preaching is always complicated with a text. We must, therefore, determine the relation in which subject and text should stand to one another. We shall also indicate the kind of texts that should be chosen, whether literal or figurative, whether doctrinal or preceptive. We shall consider the subjects you will naturally deal with, there being very few compared with the texts at your disposal. We shall consider the invention of the subject out of the matter of the text. In this, creative power is exercised, and rhetorical skill and inspiration are manifested. We shall consider the unity of the subject, its organic structure and rhetorical qualities.

II. The *discussion of the subject* with direct and supreme reference to your purpose in speaking, which

must never be merely teaching, but always something ulterior for the sake of which instruction is imparted. The subject must be discussed or explained rhetorically. Rhetorical *explanation*, as distinguished from verbal or grammatical, must be understood. Rhetorical *proof* must also be studied and mastered, its kinds and matter.

To excite emotion, explanation and proof must be suitably arranged. By this, *Movement* is secured, and friction in the mind is produced, which is indispensable to excitation through the understanding. *To intensify emotion*, *adaptation* must be aimed at. You must take into account your hearers' active powers, classifying their emotions, feelings, or affections; you must take into account their knowledge and character; their maxims, prejudices, etc., and also their circumstances and environments; you must learn how to make emotions subservient to your purpose by exciting some feelings, allaying others, and converting one class of feelings into another. You must know how to *adapt yourself* to your subject and to your hearers.

My aim shall be to show how all the power suited to your purpose that is contained in your subject, may be brought out and applied to the whole mind of your hearers—understanding, sensibilities, and will. More than this Rhetoric cannot do.

Principles will be stated and settled; and the need of Homiletical knowledge and skill to the preacher will be explained and vindicated.

While Homiletics is recognized as a part of ministerial education, yet students labour under special disadvantages in prosecuting this study. Special preliminary qualifications for it—such as a knowledge of Logic and Psychology—are not demanded, while linguistic qualifications for the study of Exegetics and

Theology are made imperative. Besides, sufficient importance is not attached to Homiletics. It should not be co-ordinated with the other subjects in the Theological curriculum, individually, but with them all combined. There are only two educational qualifications for preaching: the one is a competent knowledge of revealed religion; the other is the knowledge and skill needed to present it in a popular manner, and to enforce its claims. Moreover, far too little time is devoted to Homiletics. Supposing that the study could be prosecuted without special qualifications, and that principles and rules relating to effective speaking could be soon acquired; yet, without much time and labor, skill in the application of these could not be acquired. Think of the protracted and earnest labors to acquire skill in speaking by Demosthenes, Cicero, C. J. Fox, Webster, Gladstone, etc., not to mention the most eloquent Jesuit missionaries. Think how rarely true eloquence is acquired. The time devoted to rhetorical studies is entirely disproportionate to the time given to other branches. We can, indeed, explain and establish principles; but "a system of principles imperfectly comprehended, and not familiarized by practice, will prove an impediment rather than a help." Students often leave college with little knowledge of Homiletical principles, and less skill in the application of them. They are thus placed at a great disadvantage, and they naturally forget what they have imperfectly learned, and they have to acquire by much study and painful experience what they ought to have mastered at college.

It is now proper to indicate wherein the Homiletics presented in this system differs from other works on the subject. It is commonly assumed, and some-

times strongly asserted, that preaching the Gospel is rhetorically different from speaking on political or judicial subjects. This is a fundamental mistake. As a result of this, preaching tends to become either purely didactic, pedantic, or sensational. The subjects and aim of preaching are, indeed, different from those of ordinary, deliberative or forensic speaking, but this should not affect the rhetorical form of discourse. Rhetoric has no matter of its own; and its principles are equally suited to speaking on all practical subjects, *i.e.*, subjects affecting the political, social, or religious welfare of mankind.

The mistake referred to is due mainly to two things; *one* is that Homiletics is taught empirically, *i.e.*, not scientifically. It is said that "Homiletics is a well-meant attempt to build a system of Sacred Rhetoric on what is the only proper foundation—the preaching of Christ and the Apostles and Prophets. Valuable aid may also be obtained from Augustine, Luther, etc. A careful examination of discourses which have come down to us with a reputation of power, and which also move us when we read them, as well as the careful examination of effective modern sermons, reveal certain characteristics which were in them all, and which can be definitely stated. Homiletics is simply a body of principles or rules gathered by such searching analysis of the best sermons in every age of the Church" (*Prof. Fisk*). Works on Homiletics deal largely in sermons, and construct classes in which they may be placed; and in outlines of the sermons of living preachers which are constantly publishing. This is empiricism and it is not satisfactory. It is true that science must begin in this inductive method, and that Aristotle adopted it. Still he did not stop at this, but proceeded at once to

construct systems of both Logic and Rhetoric on broad and fundamental principles. Besides, to find rhetorical principles only in sermons is to deprive ourselves of examples of eloquence to be found in the speeches of the great Greek and Roman orators, and even of modern statesmen ; and it is to ignore entirely valuable ancient works on Rhetoric. This must tend to perpetuate the distinction between sacred and secular eloquence, to the great detriment of the former ; and it has effectively discouraged all attempts to construct a Systematic Homiletics.

The Bible does not teach Homiletics any more than it teaches Systems of Theology or of Moral Philosophy. Although we must be indebted to it for saving knowledge, yet we must by the study and exercise of our own faculties acquire a knowledge of persuasive discourse, at the same time availing ourselves of the knowledge and experience of others.

If we must analyze effective modern sermons, whose shall we analyze ? Those of men of great ability and learning ? But their methods are often conflicting and illogical, their excellence being more in the matter than in the form. Shall we analyze the sermons of popular preachers ? But popularity, in the ordinary acceptation of the term, gives a low and poor idea of eloquence ; and it may be due to novelty, presumption, advertising, sensationalism, or the use of means by which any excitement may be got up. Shall we analyze the sermons of those who have done most good ? But who is to determine this ? the abiding effects of good preaching being spiritual and invisible. The supposed good may be due to the previous, contemporaneous, or subsequent labours of others, or to the special work of the Holy Spirit. At the end of our Lord's ministry

there were only 500 brethren, while through Peter's sermon 3,000 were converted. Empiricism is largely to blame for all that is peculiar, unnatural, and ineffective in preaching.

The *other* thing that has made preaching different from other kinds of rhetorical discourse, is allowing a Scripture text to determine the structure of the discourse. A text is considered a necessary part of a sermon. Webster defines it, "A discourse grounded on some text or passage of Scripture." This introduces an element that has produced much confusion. A text is not an essential part of a sermon. Good Gospel sermons can be preached without texts. A rhetorical discourse must have a definite subject : this is essential. It is not meant that texts should not be used ; but that it is the subject contained in the text—*i.e.*, the soul of the text—and the end aimed at that should determine the structure of the sermon. Allowing a text to give form to a sermon has done much harm. (*a*) This is evident in the classification of discourses, as Topical, Textual, and Expository. It practically amounts to this : a Topical is made on a small fragment of text ; a Textual, on a larger portion which contains several important words, or statements ; an Expository, generally, on several verses. The basis of this classification is the text, which is not essential ; and the subject, if there should happen to be a subject, which is essential, is deprived of its full control. If the textual or the expository sermon has not a definite subject possessing unity, organic structure and practical end, it is not a rhetorical discourse at all.

A less objectionable classification might be found in the matter, as doctrinal or preceptive. But this departs from rhetoric which deals mainly with the form

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of discourse. Besides, a purely doctrinal sermon can not be rhetorical. (b) Allowing the text to control the sermon has led to a mechanical partition of discourse: the text, introduction, explanation, proposition, division, development and conclusion. A sermon may have all these, but they are not essential. The only essential parts are the subject and the discussion of it; these must be in every rational discourse. To make a system of Homiletics an exposition of these seven parts is to confound things accidental with things essential; and it must lead to hopeless confusion. Such partition must be fatal to invention, freedom and inspiration. (c) A still worse partition of the matter of discourse is to divide the sermon invariably into three or four heads. If a subject is explained and proved, if a duty is presented and enforced, or if a principle and its working are indicated, there can, in such cases, be only two co-ordinate heads. In view of these facts it is no wonder that students of Homiletical works are perplexed and discouraged, and that preaching is made as different as possible from effective speaking on all the practical affairs of personal and social life.

A simpler system can be based on two fundamental principles: one is that the preacher must have some definite end in view, some object to be gained; the other is that he must have some facts or arguments by presenting which he expects to gain his end. These facts or arguments are the means which he uses; and these reduced to a concentrated and organic form constitute the subject of discourse. In order to this, they must be meditated on and elaborated by the mind working according to its own laws, until they are fused together and thus acquire unity, so that they may be presented in one field of view and support one another.

The subject thus acquires organic structure, and being quickened by the fervid zeal of the orator, it becomes a living thing. The *subject* thus understood is the germ of the discourse ; the whole must come out of it as the oak tree comes out of the acorn. The subject contains in a concentrated form all the interest and power of the sermon. Hence no essential part of it can be omitted ; and no proof or illustration can be added for its own sake, but only so far as it is needed to prove or illustrate the subject. Now having constructed or invented such a subject, if a person can by proof or explanation bring out all the interest and persuasive power contained in the subject that can serve his purpose ; and if he can apply it to the whole mind, the understanding, sensibility, and will of his hearers, not even overlooking taste and imagination, he will do all that can possibly be done.

It is evident that he must be guided by logical principles, of division and analysis, in bringing out the persuasive power of the subject ; and he must be guided by psychology in applying the power to all the faculties of mind. Thus we find in Logic and Psychology a scientific basis for Rhetoric or Homiletics.

You can easily see the conditions of success in this study. If the student will not master rhetorical methods of explanation and proof, and if he will not study the powers of mind that he addresses, what is in it constitutionally, what it has acquired by study and by the adoption of principles, maxims and even prejudices, and indeed, what is in its environments while he is addressing it, he will not be able to speak effectively and persuasively, he will not learn to do justice to his subject, to his hearers and to himself. There is no part of education in which defective elementary

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PLAN OF THIS WORK.

Having established principles, two things will mainly occupy our attention and time. I. *The Subject*; II. *The Discussion of it*. To give pre-eminence to these as the essential parts of discourse, the introduction, peroration, etc., will not be co-ordinated with them, but will find a place in a miscellaneous part at the end.

I. The Subject will require much consideration, especially as it is always complicated with a text which has a tendency to encroach upon it, and indeed to supersede it. The difference between it and a text, the connection which should exist between them; the choice of texts and subjects; the unity of the subject and the invention of the subject, will require earnest attention and much time.

II. The Proof or the Discussion of the Subject will be greatly facilitated by the proper construction of the Subject itself. The discussion will include *Method* by which its persuasive power will be fully brought out in a skilful manner. The discussion will also include *Rhetorical development*, which implies the application of the subject to the mind. This is for the purpose of dealing with the emotions or feelings and the will, awakening interest, exciting emotions or feelings, and transforming or suppressing those that are opposed to the effect you wish to produce.

Before proceeding to the work indicated, I shall define Rhetoric and Homiletics, and refute objections to the rhetorical presentation of truth, especially of the Gospel, and to the utility of Homiletical culture.

The Definitions of Homiletics most frequently given are, "The Art of Sermonizing," and "Sacred Rhetoric." The latter is to be preferred, as it indicates that Homiletics is closely related to Rhetoric; besides, it does not make it a mere art to be acquired by practice. But even this is objectionable, as it makes Homiletics a species of Rhetoric having its differentia in the matter, while Rhetoric has no matter peculiar to itself. According to Vinet, "Eloquence, certainly, is always the same; it is not one thing in the pulpit, another in the senate or at the bar. There are not two Rhetorics any more than two Logics. Still, the nature of ecclesiastical discourse involves differences, adds rules which constitute a particular art under the name of Homiletics," *i.e.*, the difference is merely in the subject and the purpose or end. *Homiletics, then, is rhetorical principles applied to the construction of religious discourse.*

Rhetoric must now be defined. It is, according to Aristotle, "A faculty of considering all the possible means of persuasion on every subject" (B. I., C. II., s. 1). Again, "It is, as it were, a kind of off-shoot of logic, and that department of moral philosophy which it is fair to call the science of social life." But this connection with moral philosophy he subsequently denies, asserting that "it is a sort of subordinate division of logic and portraiture of it, neither of them being a science of any definite subject, but being certain faculties for furnishing ourselves with arguments" (Sec. 7). The disposition to connect it with Ethics was due to the practical end of Rhetoric and to a desire to dignify it by giving it matter of its own, a sad mistake, changing its very nature as a formal science. Rhetoric is, according to Archbishop Whately, "Argumentative

composition." But it is defective as it leaves out persuasion, which is its distinguishing characteristic. Whately, however, treats of persuasion ; but he refuses to admit it into his definition, as restricting it too much. He also calls it "an off-shoot from logic." But this, on his part at least, is defective in another aspect, as his logic does not recognize the doctrine of concepts at all, and hence it furnishes no guide in rhetorical explanation, which is a very great defect. Theremin, adopting the view that Aristotle rejects, makes Rhetoric a part of Ethics ; and, in view of the practical end of rhetorical discourse, declares eloquence to be a virtue. The Stoics declared eloquence to be virtue and wisdom. But they defined virtue as knowledge, not merely theoretical but practical. All the great ancient rhetoricians declared that an orator should be a good man ; and that he must at least appear to be such in his discourse. Quintilian defines oratory as "the art of speaking well." Rhetoric is, according to Campbell, "the grand art of communication not of ideas only, but of sentiments, passions, dispositions and purposes." According to Isocrates, "the father of eloquence, from whose school none but real heroes proceeded, as from the Trojan horse" (Cicero) "Rhetoric is the science of persuasion." This might be improved by calling it the science of persuasive discourse, as it is possible to persuade without words. A gesture, a look may be eloquent. It is necessary to define Rhetoric, if we define Homiletics as the application of its principles to religious discourse.

Rhetorical discourse always contemplates one to be addressed, whom we may consider an opponent, whom we wish to bring over to our views, feelings and purposes. Truth is presented rhetorically when it is

presented with this express design. Thus it is necessarily persuasive. It always has for its object some practical effect on the hearer, to induce him to embrace it, and to yield up his mind to its influence. It is this essentially practical tendency or direction—this seeking something beyond itself—that distinguishes it from philosophy, poetry, painting and sculpture. In philosophy you may present clearly the truth and the proof of it, you may use the absolutely strongest arguments you have; you need not select and arrange them to excite emotion and influence the will. You do not require to consider the character, maxims and circumstances of your hearers. Philosophy has for its object the discovery and presentation of truth for its own sake. Whereas rhetoric presents and applies truth for the sake of the influence it is desired to exert. If the philosopher desires to convert men to his views, and to exert a practical influence on them, he must present truth rhetorically. Thus his system acquires a mixed character. In Poetry the writer's idea is presented in the most beautiful form for its own sake. If the description is true to it, and pleases the taste and excites admiration, it is all that is absolutely required. It belongs to æsthetics. "There are many poems, however, that depart from the pure type: didactic, moral, philosophical and scientific poems. These are of a mixed character. When a poem kindles enthusiasm, fire, high and noble aspirations, it has touched the spring of action and becomes eloquence. The greatest compositions are not the pure poems, but those that, without submerging artistic beauty, can both exercise the intellectual powers, and stimulate the active dispositions of the mind" (*Prof. Bain*). Thus while poetry and philosophy may become persuasive, yet this

is incidental, not necessary. But rhetorical discourse must persuade ; if it fails to do this, it departs from its distinguishing characteristic. When the orator beautifies his discourse, it is for the sake of persuasion, to which even beauty must become purely subservient. " We must distinguish oratorical discourse from didactic discourse, which concludes with an idea, and from poetry which has no conclusion, and of which the purpose is not out of itself, but in itself " (*Vinet*). Poetry is an imitative art deriving its subjects from external nature and from human life. Thus it is eminently descriptive. But this is not suitable to oratory. " The orator must present objects in profile, not in statuesque form." When an orator fills up and beautifies his picture, he becomes engrossed in the creation of his own imagination and taste, and loses sight of his audience. Description presents its objects in the relations of space, and thus has no movement. An elaborate description will arrest the progress of discourse, and will suppress the interest and feeling previously awakened, and which cannot be reproduced in many cases.

This is well known to novel readers, who invariably skip long descriptive passages, that they may not lose the trace and interest of the plot that is gradually unfolding. " The orator who delights in images and pictures speaks to the imagination of his hearers rather than to their mind and heart. He will effect but little and instruct less. Preachers who delight in continual descriptions, whether of physical or moral nature, make sermons subject to their taste for imagery, which are only galleries or pictures that may amuse, but can never instruct or touch any one " (*Bautain*). The same may be said of painting and statuary which merely embody

the artist's idea for its own sake. These arts in many cases tend to refine and ennable the mind; but this is not their grand aim or distinctive quality as fine arts, but one of their incidental results. Thus the practical end and distinctive character of rhetorical discourse is persuasion. For this it invents its subject, explains, proves and beautifies it. "The orator is not a man of words and pictures—of paint and drapery—but he is a man of ideas, sentiments and high and noble purposes. He does not address the imagination but the whole mind of his hearers, understanding, sensibility and will. The true orator is a leader and reformer of men, and a mighty power for good in the world and in the Church."

We shall have nothing directly to do with elocution; but, indirectly, the proper construction of discourse will greatly aid delivery. Teachers of elocution properly select well composed passages. Persons who have studied elocution are sure to fall into incorrect delivery, if they do not construct their discourses on rhetorical principles. If a person is the author of his sermon, and is suitably affected by it, and its form is correct, he will deliver it in a natural, pleasing and effective manner.

I shall not insist on fine writing, as this belongs rather to Poetry than to Rhetoric. But I shall insist on the careful and accurate adaptation of style to the subject and to the hearers. What are called figures belong rather to poetry than to rhetoric, except "the rapid flashing metaphor, which is the orator's figure."

The close relation of Logic to Rhetoric has already been indicated. It furnishes principles which guide in explanation and proof. The relation of ethics to rhetoric is seen in what should be the grand end of

rhetorical discourse, its moral purpose. Its relation to æsthetics was at one time much insisted on. Dr. Blair treated rhetoric as a department of æsthetics, having mainly to do with the beautiful and the sublime. Traces of merited contempt for it thus incurred are still to be found. Rhetoric does not belong to Logic, Æsthetics, or Ethics ; it merely presupposes them, assumes them, and develops itself in conformity to their principles. "In respect of the matter of discourse, Rhetoric derives its regulative principles mainly from Logic ; in respect to the form of discourse, from Æsthetics ; in respect of the end of discourse, from Ethics" (*Day*).

There are some peculiarities not rhetorical, however, in religious discourse which should be kept in view. They are very favorable to eloquence. The preacher has the matter of discourse furnished to him. He thus finds in Revelation the authority for his preaching, and is not required to pursue long trains of reasoning which would be fatal to eloquence. The Gospel, too, is perfectly adapted to man's fallen nature, for which it provides an adequate remedy. The end which the preacher should have in view is most pious and benevolent ; it is the conversion, sanctification and blessedness of his hearers, in subordination to the glory of God. This is not true of the deliberative or of the forensic orator. The preacher seeks the good of his hearers, and not so to influence them as to secure some ulterior personal advantage. The fact that the preacher seeks the permanent good of his hearers must necessarily make his oratory much more didactic than that which is secular. The more permanent the impression aimed at is, the more ample must be the information, the more clear and accurate the arrangement of it, and the more deeply must it be lodged in the mind.

The fact that the preacher seeks the spiritual good of his hearers, and that the message he has to deliver is Christ's message of love, should make his address affectionate. He must not consider his hearers antagonists, whatever may be their character or prejudices. He must view them with love or at least with compassion, and he must address them as if they were sincere and ingenuous, and seek to attach his discourse to anything that is good in their minds, either actually or potentially. These points require special attention. They require careful method, and solemnity and earnestness in delivery ; and the faculty of communicating a large amount of sacred truth in an interesting and impressive manner ; and they forbid personalities, appeals to passions, reproach and invective.

It is to be regretted that strong prejudices exist against the study of Homiletics or Rhetoric. These, though not expressed, lead to the depreciation and neglect of it.

i. It is said that the practice of rhetorical art is dishonorable, because by it feelings are excited which blind the judgment of the hearers, and thus enable the eloquent speaker to master their heart and will, and to move them like machines. Such objectors contend that the understanding alone should be addressed, and that no attempt should be made to excite feelings and influence the will. Many clergymen in England act on this principle, and deprecate emotion as a species of fanaticism. But this objection is not valid when the understanding is satisfied, and when through it emotions are excited which are voluntary, and which do not impair the hearer's accountability and self-control. To object to rhetorical discourse when this condition is complied with, is to deny to man the faculty

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of persuasion, and to find fault with the constitution of his mind. Still, the objection is valid against all direct excitation of passion, all sensationalism, and the use of cunning and deceptive tricks.

2. It is said that this study is useless because many effective and successful preachers never prosecuted it. But it is difficult to estimate the success of preaching, as it consists mainly in the change and improvement of the heart which is invisible. Besides, the real and permanent success of such preachers is proportionate to their conforming unconsciously to homiletical principles under the influence of warmth, zeal, and singleness of purpose. This is genius, which, although exceptional, confirms the principles of rhetoric. Persons should not believe without indubitable evidence that they possess this gift; nor should they consider the possession of it an apology for neglecting to cultivate it.

3. It is said that Homiletics is injurious because its principles hamper the preacher. This is impossible if the science is based on logic and psychology. If a mind is undisciplined and erratic, homiletical study will educate it. After this, there will be harmony between mental activity and rhetorical principles, which will guide and assist. Should a well-disciplined mind be hampered by such principles, it may be safely assumed that the principles are unsound, or that they are not understood. A person cannot be hampered by being taught that he must have a definite aim in speaking, and that he must adapt his sermon to his hearers; nor will he be placed under painful restraint by learning to analyze or prove a subject properly, especially if by adequate practice he is able to carry on these processes without conscious effort.

4. It is said that the study of Homiletics is

irreligious, as it implies trust in artificial rhetoric instead of trust in the Holy Spirit. But Rhetoric is not artificial in a bad sense, *i.e.*, as opposed to natural, as the rhetorical is the most natural form of discourse. Persons reasoned correctly before logic was invented ; they spoke persuasively before rhetoric was discovered ; and they composed grammatically before grammars were constructed. In these cases nature was followed. Hence when a man reasons correctly, speaks persuasively and grammatically, his discourse is in the best sense natural. An ill-constructed sermon is uninteresting, and it is repugnant to right feeling and purpose ; it displeases every one, hence it must be unnatural. A good discourse is a noble work of art, and cannot be otherwise. If a man invents a subject and elaborates it in his own mind, and adapts it to the practical end he has in view, and has his heart inflamed by it, it is a work of art. The only way in which he can make a discourse that is not a work of art is to take the first view of a text that occurs to him, and then, without plan or meditation, to state thoughts that happen to occur to him, and these confused and incoherent. Besides, homiletical skill is quite compatible with trust in divine grace. An ignorant man is as likely as an educated man to trust in his own powers. There is nothing in proper intellectual culture incompatible with entire trust in God to give testimony to the word of His grace. It is not relevant in this connection to quote the Lord's saying to the Apostles, that when brought before governors and kings for His sake they should take no thought how or what they should speak. If ordinary preachers understand this as referring literally to themselves, they cannot expect the fulfilment of the Lord's promise until they are arrested and brought before

governors and kings. Besides, if it forbids the study of rhetoric, it forbids also the study of the Scriptures or of the 'ogy, as they were not merely to take no thought how they should speak, but also what they should speak.

Before concluding this Introduction, I wish to show the utility of Homiletical culture to the ministry. This is amply attested by the declarations of the ablest preachers. They acknowledge that those admirable discourses which seem like the inspiration of genius, are the fruit of persevering study, and of private and protracted meditation and prayer. Their extensive and various reading, their observation of nature and of man, personally and socially, are intelligently and purposely made subservient to the interest and power of their preaching. There are also various special reasons why homiletical skill should be acquired at any cost. One is that the Gospel should be preached as correctly and powerfully as possible. This is due to the subject itself, to the end contemplated, and to preaching as a divine institution. The preaching of the Gospel is, according to the Apostles, the most important work of the ministry. They place it above government, sacraments and the care of the poor (Eph. iii: 8, I Cor. i: 17, Acts vi: 4). It is a mistake when a minister spends nearly all his time in acquiring knowledge, and little or none in acquiring the art of communicating it. Another reason is, that preaching does not in general seem to give satisfaction. The reasons for this are not hard to find.

One is that acceptable preaching is now more difficult than ever. This is largely due to the diffusion of education and general information. Besides, the preacher has to compete for influence with daily news-

papers, public lectures elaborately prepared, and sermons by popular and gifted preachers who are capable only of occasional and special efforts. It indicates weakness when ministers complain of the influence of the Press. There is no fear that the Press will ever supersede the Pulpit. In the Dark Ages, when there was no Press, there was no preaching; now while presses are multiplied there is more preaching than ever. Truth presented by the living voice of the preacher and by his expressive countenance, has an immense advantage over what is presented on a printed page.

Another reason is to be found in the spirit of the age. This is an age of extraordinary excitement in all departments of thought and activity; and hence it complains of lack of zeal in the pulpit. It is also an age of scepticism. Hence, many who hate evangelical doctrine, profess aversion only to the manner of preaching it; and declare that preaching has lost its power, and has survived its interest and usefulness. It is evident that preaching is now in a state of transition. Hitherto it has been too didactic. There has been too much stiffness and formality in the construction of discourse, and in the announcement of its leading divisions. Its address has been too much confined to the understanding, and it has demanded an amount of thought and attention that people are unable or unwilling to give. Hence, it is not as attractive as it should be. This has been painfully felt by preachers. Hence, many have had recourse to external things to attract and interest, such as artistic music and church adornment. Some have greatly reduced the amount of Scripture truth in their sermons, have adopted a kind of word-painting style, a theatrical delivery and

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even painted scenery as in the U.S., to illustrate Scripture themes. Others, despairing even of such attractions, seem to put forth their utmost efforts to amuse and attract the young, preaching to them specially, forming societies among them, and furnishing amusement for them in week-evening meetings, thus virtually surrendering all hope of doing elderly persons any good. There is a feeling, too, that a crowd must be collected, that people must be induced to come to church—as if they are to convert one another—while there is less thought of edifying them there.

Now all these means of contending with the evil complained of are based on the fundamental mistake, that there is anything in the world more powerfully and permanently attractive than the Gospel of God's grace. Let its doctrines be presented rhetorically, let them be brought into living contact with the whole mind, and their power and attraction will soon be felt. Paul's remedy for those who will not endure sound doctrine, is simply to preach it to them in season and out of season. If they shrink from the labor of close attention, let the preacher assume this labor by studying and elaborating his ideas so that they shall become as clear as crystal, and shine in their own light and beauty. Let the preacher's heart be inflamed with the truth which he speaks; let him have confidence in his office and doctrine, and in the promise of the Holy Spirit, and let him be filled with zeal for his hearers' welfare and God's glory, and then he may expect that people, instead of being uninterested, will have their heart burn within them. When a man who has such a Gospel to preach, such a remedy to present, such assurance of divine aid, complains that people are not attracted and interested, he merely condemns himself.

Let the people be taught that it is their duty and privilege to attend church to worship God; and not merely to receive instruction which they might obtain from books, but to hear the truth earnestly proclaimed, according to Christ's appointment, and officially by His ambassadors; and to receive those spiritual influences which are needed and promised to render the preaching of the Gospel effectual unto salvation:

PART I. THE SUBJECT AND TEXT.

The importance of having both a Subject and Text is evident. A rhetorical, or any discourse, must have a definite subject, whether formally expressed or not. Many do not perceive the importance of the subject because it is short, being generally stated in a single sentence. But it should contain in a concentrated form the whole discourse with all its interest and power; so that nothing can be legitimately introduced into the discourse that does not explain, prove, or illustrate the subject. Hence, when the rhetorical subject is invented and mastered, the greatest part of the hard work connected with the making of a discourse is done. Much time and labor, therefore, must be devoted to the invention of the subject. The mental conflict involved in this process is due to the exercise of creative power, and it is the condition of the preacher's inspiration, of the ease with which he will compose and remember his sermon, and of the effective manner in which he will deliver it. To shirk this labor must be fatal both to personal improvement, and to powerful and effective preaching.

In favor of having also a Text, there are good use and several obvious advantages. The Lord, in the synagogue at Nazareth, set the example of preaching

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from a text. This was followed by the Apostles in general ; and this practice has continued in the Church ever since. It has manifest advantages. It places the preacher in his true position as a minister of the Word, not presenting his own sentiments, but declaring the will, counsel, and testimony of God. It gives authority to discourse when it is seen not merely to be in accordance with the Word of God in general, but also to be vitally connected with a specific passage, of which the discourse is, less or more, the explanation and application. It also imparts to preaching variety and freshness, qualities by which the Bible is pre-eminently distinguished from all other books.

Chapter I. The *distinction* between a Text and a Subject, and the *relation* in which they should stand to one another.

In Heb. xii: 14, you will find the subjects : 1st: "The necessity of holiness as a qualification for seeing the Lord." 2nd. "The duty of following peace with all men." You may say something on both of these, but a well constructed and effective discourse you cannot have, because you have not a definite subject. You may make a sermon on each of these commands. But the subject that can unite both is plainly, "The duty of following peace with all men with such earnestness as to sacrifice any thing for it except holiness." This is placing a man under tremendous pressure. Thus you have in this text your choice of three subjects. John iii: 16 has been discussed thus: "The giver, the gift, the motive in bestowing it, the design in bestowing it, the condition to be complied with on our part." This method is purely mechanical, and requires neither logic nor rhetoric. But a subject is expressly stated in the text ; it is, "God's great love to sinners

evinced, 1st, by the gift of His Son ; 2nd, by His design in bestowing this gift." The grand proofs of love are in making sacrifices for its objects and seeking their happiness. The fact that God bestows salvation gratuitously, *i.e.*, on condition of faith, may serve to enhance the gift ; but it cannot be co-ordinated with the other two proofs. Should you take for your subject, " Faith in Christ the condition of obtaining salvation," this may be proved, 1st, by the express statement of the text ; 2nd, by showing that you could give no equivalent for the gift of Christ, and that you could do nothing to merit such salvation. Luke xiv : 15-24—Subject, " The refusal of the invitation on the part of those addressed, is the only thing that will finally exclude from the blessedness of the Kingdom." Proved, 1st, that the things that are generally supposed to exclude are no obstacles ; 2nd, that those first invited reveal this in their apology which refers only to worldliness.

Proverbs xxiii : 17-18, " The nature of this fear in a truly religious mind ; and the blessedness flowing from its influence." I. There is the fear of offending God and its consequences. (a) God is a being of infinite greatness and excellence. He is very near to us. He is infinite in holiness. There is nothing in the Gospel to diminish this religious fear ; God in applying the remedy renews the heart and puts His fear into it. (b) Fear of the consequences of offending God : the loss of God's favour, the injury and ruin of the mind itself. II. " The blessedness flowing," etc. (a) It suppresses all envious and disquieting feelings. (b) Produces assurance that all things will end well, that our hopes will not be blasted. Imp.—How anxious should we be to possess this holy affection. How sad is the condition of the mind in which there is no fear of God.

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Gal. i : 4, 5, "The supreme importance of being rescued from this present evil world," *i.e.*, the world of mankind in its sinful state. I. Christ gave himself for our sins to deliver us from this present evil world : (a) viewed as guilty before God ; (b) as sinful or morally corrupt ; (c) as miserable. II. Such deliverance is most desirable in its own nature. Other things may help us to realize this ; Christ gave himself for our sins that He might, etc. It was according to the will of God and our Father, and most glorifying to him. Imp.—We must either be rescued or ruined. Christians should estimate the greatness of salvation by what Christ thought of it, and suffered for it.

These examples may illustrate the difference between a text and a subject. The matter of the text is generally in a concrete form, and cannot be easily discussed or proved. It may entirely lack unity and practical aim. Thus persons who have only texts—not subjects—are apt to make discourses in which the ideas are confused, incoherent, and aimless. On the other hand, the subject is invented out of the subject-matter of the text. It is to this extent a product of thought ; it is elaborated in the mind acting according to the laws of thought. It thus acquires organic structure ; it is easily analyzed and proved ; and it makes an impression on the preacher's heart, and thus readily follows the principles of rhetoric.

The distinction now indicated between the subject and the text will help to determine the *relation* in which they should stand to one another. Except in a few cases, they cannot be identical. Hence it is not necessary that the subject should exhaust the text, although the discussion must exhaust the subject. This is opposed to the dictum of old writers which is

that "a sermon must give the entire sense of the whole text, in order to which it must be considered in every view" (*Claude*). This is in many cases a rhetorical impossibility. Instead of presenting a text in every view, you may present a particular aspect of it. It is not necessary that a subject should contain a proposition, yet it should be such as can be so stated. It is quite legitimate to preach on a phrase as "the love of God," "precious faith," "all the words of this life," or "obedience to the faith." Care should be taken not to preach on a subordinate idea in a text, as it is not treating the text fairly, and it is sure to disappoint and sometimes offend hearers. The subject should preserve the individuality of the text to secure variety in preaching, to guard against abstract themes, and to derive illustrations from the context. The subject should have the spirit of the text, as incongruity in this respect is painfully felt. Although in some cases a text perfectly suited to the subject cannot be found, yet care should be taken not to make a text merely the motto of a sermon. *The divine authority which the subject derives from the text must be proportionate to the closeness and vitality of the connection between them.*

This implies two important truths. *One* is that the scripture text must be the Word of God, or approved by it, or in harmony with it. There are many sayings in the Bible that do not profess to be the Word of God: there are sayings of good but uninspired men, of wicked men, and even of devils. Such sayings, if suitable for texts, may be preached on, if they are in harmony with the Word of God. Many of the sayings of Job's friends whom the Lord reproved, are good texts; as it was not so much the principles contained in them as the application of them to Job's case that was censured.

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But even when the text is the Word of God, care must be taken to ascertain whether it be correctly rendered in our version, and also to ascertain its true meaning. Here is ample room for criticism and exegesis. The confidence of the people in the authorized version should not, however, be unnecessarily weakened ; nor should their patience be exhausted or their thoughts distracted by criticism which should be prosecuted in the study, only its rich and edifying fruits being reserved for public discourse. The context should be carefully studied to ascertain the true meaning, and also, in many cases, to find a subject. For example, when preaching on Jude 20, 21, you might take for your subject, "The duty devolving on Christians to keep themselves in the love of God, as here indicated ; and the immense advantages of so doing." Or, in view of the context, the subject may be, "The grand antidote to seductive errors and sinful conduct, here referred to." It is not contending directly against error and sin, but striving to keep the heart right, depending on divine grace, and aspiring to eternal life through the mercy of Christ. Notice the same principle in II Peter iii: 17, 18

The *other* truth is that there must be a logical connection between the subject and the text, as without this the subject can derive no support from the text. It is, therefore, not honest to preach a doctrine which your text does not contain, however scriptural and sound the doctrine may be, *e.g.*, to preach on total depravity from Isaiah i: 5, 6, or on Christ's ability to save the greatest sinners, from Heb. vii: 25, or on indecision, from I Kings xviii: 21, or on the preaching of the Gospel under the Old Testament, from Heb. iv: 2, or from Ps. lxviii: 11.

This rule is habitually disregarded by those who allegorize or spiritualize texts. If a text does not contain some principle fit to be the subject of discourse without allegorizing it, it is not a suitable text, *e.g.*, preaching on the perseverance of the saints from the words "Faint yet pursuing." It is unfortunate when a preacher forms this allegorizing habit. He is apt to lose the power of distinguishing his own fancies from the Word of God, and also to give up all proper study of the Word of God, as he finds his resources not so much in it as in his own imagination. It is most offensive to cultivated minds, as it is in very bad taste. Besides, it tends to introduce doctrinal error. A mystical and allegorical manner of speaking of the Lord's Supper led to the Romish perversion of it. The same thing now leads some to attach saving efficacy to its observance, while it debars from the Lord's Table others who are timid. Origen was the founder of the system of spiritualizing. He attributes to the Scriptures a threefold sense : I, a somatic, literal, or historic sense, furnished immediately by the meaning of the words, but only serving as a veil for a higher sense ; II, a psychical or moral sense, animating the first, and serving for general edification ; III, a pneumatical or mystical and ideal sense, for those who stand on the high ground of philosophical knowledge.

But the rule is not set aside by the use of texts in which a spiritual meaning is plainly intended, as the parables of our Lord, Old Testament types of Him, and texts in which there is a principle which may be legitimately applied to spiritual things. Parables were not mainly intended to beautify discourse, but to conceal for a time what people could not understand, John xvi : 25-29 ; Matt. xiii : 13-52. Although they were

intended to teach spiritual truth, yet even they are not to be allegorized; but the point or moral of the parable must be found and held fast, and all other things must be considered parts of the figure to which no counterpart in the moral is to be sought, e.g., in the parables of the lost sheep and the lost piece of silver, the moral is the joy of Christ in the conversion of even one sinner. Thus no spiritual significance is to be attached to the numbers, except the *one*.

As to Old Testament types of Christ and of spiritual things, we must adopt only those for which we have divine authority. The temple was typical of the Church, but this does not teach that priests and Levites were types of various orders of Gospel ministers, or that the tongs and snuffers had any spiritual significance. Hence the types must not be allegorized. The illustration is unduly pressed when, referring to the Church, we speak of the Architect, the material, the plan, the foundation and the style. Higher analogies only should be taken into account. The connection will indicate the salient points. There are many fine *illustrations* in passages which are not declared to be typical, as you may find beautiful illustrations in nature. All that is meant is that such passages should not be used as texts, for they impart no authority to the subjects supposed to be found in them.

As an example of texts that may be legitimately applied to spiritual things, there is the saying of the leper, "If thou wilt thou canst make me clean," because leprosy is a type of sin, and our Lord's miracles were signs, and they were designedly emblematical of His power to save the soul from sin and misery. There is no apology for allegorizing a book so full and varied in its teaching as the Bible. Besides, histories and

biographies contain valuable lessons which are lost when they are spiritualized ; moreover, the thing is dishonest, and it destroys the value and authority of texts altogether.

Chapter II. *Choice of Texts and Subjects.* A text and a subject may occur simultaneously to the mind ; but, in general, the one is chosen for the other. A diligent student of theology, or an active pastor who studies the state of his congregation, will find many subjects on which he should preach. Hence, he will have to seek texts suited to his subjects. He may be tempted to apply force to his text to make it fit his subject ; and he will be apt to neglect the individuality and spirit of the text, and the light shed on it by the context. On the other hand, the diligent student of Scripture will find many texts on which he is inclined to preach, or texts will find him, forcing themselves on his attention. In such a case a subject must be found in the text. The text will impart its complexion and spirit to both subject and sermon. The subject will seem to grow out of the text, preserving its individuality and beauty.

Choice of Texts.—A good text, is a real treasure to a preacher. It interests and gratifies his hearers, and, being easily remembered, it helps them to retain good impressions and to recall the substance of the sermon. Finding a text is often difficult, and sometimes requires as much time as the composition of the sermon. The reason for this is that a text is not truly found till the mind is deeply impressed with it, and a subject is discovered in it ; but this is the most severe labour connected with making a sermon, and it should not be grudged.

Suggestions:—1st. Splendid figurative passages should not be chosen in the belief that the subjects which they contain, or the sermons made on them, will partake of their splendour. Young preachers are fascinated by such texts as Isaiah vi: 1-4, and Rev. i: 13-16. But in the one case it is difficult to find a subject, except in the plain words of the Seraphim, or in the proof of the Lord's divinity connected with John xii: 41; and in the other case the glory of the Saviour which is revealed is not that which attracts, but prostrates. You should always look through the drapery of the figure for a valuable subject; and if you can not find one you should not preach on the text. Besides, such texts start you at an elevation from which you must descend, which is most undesirable.

2nd. Texts that favour rhetorical treatment are greatly to be preferred. *E.g.*, If you wish to preach on conversion, instead of taking the words "Be converted," you might take in the whole verse, Acts iii: 19, or the conversion of Paul or of the thief on the cross, in which you will find his deep conviction of sin, and such exalted views of Christ in his state of the deepest humiliation as to be able to trust his soul to Him.

You may discuss a doctrine or duty from a doctrinal, experimental, or figurative text. But the more general, abstract, or objective your theme is the drier your sermon will be; and the more specific, concrete, or subjective it is the more interesting and impressive will be your preaching, and the more closely will it resemble our Lord's.

3rd. Texts that have been often preached on are not to be avoided, as they are generally the best, and it would be a loss to be deprived of them. But they must be taken up into the mind and thoroughly

elaborated and conformed to its habits of thought, and by earnest meditation, made its own. You will find new subjects in them, or subjects that have all the interest and freshness of a discovery.

4th. It is important to find new and valuable texts. The Bible is full of such. The man who seeks them with a sincere and reverent spirit and with a view to the Church's edification, will often be unexpectedly and richly rewarded. Preaching is too much confined to a few favorite passages, while the vast and precious resources of the Word of God are not explored. This must be detrimental to the health of the Church, as it is thus deprived of the rich and varied nourishment provided for it.

Choice of Subjects.—In choosing texts our attention is necessarily confined to the Word of God : in choosing subjects it must be directed to theology, to the spiritual wants of our hearers, and to the special occasions on which we may be called to preach. The number of texts at our disposal is unlimited, that of subjects is comparatively small.

1st. We should give special prominence to the great doctrines of grace, such as the character of God, especially as it is revealed in the person, offices and character of Christ ; the person and work of the Holy Spirit ; our own guilty, sinful, miserable and helpless state ; and the spiritual nature of salvation. These are the grandest, most interesting and powerful of all doctrines. With them the preacher's mind should be so thoroughly imbued as to give tone and complexion to his preaching, whatever his subject may be. We are not to assume that these doctrines are perfectly understood and realized by our hearers. The unconverted do not realize them at all, and the pious only imper-

factly. But all these doctrines need not be included in every sermon, nor should each sermon contain a full statement of the way of salvation, with invitations to exercise faith in Christ. Such preaching though proper enough in an express address to the careless and unbelieving, has not sufficient variety and breadth to interest and nourish the Church. If a single aspect of any one of these truths is made prominent, or even clearly assumed, in a sermon it will be enough. Preaching should be as full, rich and varied as the Bible itself.

2nd. It is not wise to preach purely doctrinal sermons, *i.e.* sermons designed to explain, prove and defend a doctrine, and nothing more. The objection is not to preaching the doctrines of grace, but to preaching them in a didactic manner. There is no rhetorical element in this; it is merely teaching. It is not thus the Bible sets forth doctrines. *E.g.*, Justification is never defined nor analyzed in the Bible. But it is presented in connection with spiritual life and holiness, or with the enjoyment of peace with God, or with the hope of eternal life. One practical aspect of a doctrine is sufficient for a discourse. A series of texts presenting various aspects of it may be found and discussed. The more special a subject is, the more will you find to say on it. To discuss a subject doctrinally, and seek to give effect to the discussion by an earnest, practical application, will generally prove a failure, as an effective discourse must have practical direction or movement from beginning to end.

Many preach precepts and even religious experience in a didactic manner. Every subject loses its emotional and practical nature in their hands. Every landscape in their view becomes a prairie, without light

or shade. Even Isocrates himself could not make such persons eloquent.

It is complained that doctrinal preaching is not now relished as it was formerly; and this is considered an evidence of degeneracy. But it should not be assumed without proof that purely doctrinal preaching was ever relished. It was an old *dictum*, "We should preach doctrines practically, and practice doctrinally." Besides, we cannot complain if people are satisfied with the concrete manner in which truth is presented in the Bible. Moreover, it is essential that discourse be, as far as possible, adapted to the character and taste of our hearers. If this be neglected we shall not only fail to edify them, but we shall also do injustice to our principles, and create a prejudice against them.

3rd. Subjects of an experimental nature should be frequently chosen. They give a pleasing variety to preaching. They seem to have been chosen by the prophets in the Apostolic age, I Cor. xiv : 22-25. Such subjects require much reflection, and also a knowledge of the heart, and a good deal of imagination. There is a great deal of cant that is called religious experience. It is superficial, and to men who feel deeply it is disgusting. The very phraseology that belongs to it is offensive. If such subjects are not adequately discussed, there is reason to fear that people will be misled by an unnatural, exaggerated, or spurious religious experience which prevails among certain classes, and in much religious literature. The grand test of religious experience is that of inspired men, and especially the doctrines of the Gospel, which present an accurate counterpart to it. A correct tone of religious feeling is not only valuable in itself, but it is also conservative of sound doctrine. Believers of sound doctrine will not

accept what is unsound at the outset. But if an excitement and a peculiar tone of feeling are produced, doctrines corresponding to such feeling will be eagerly embraced. When religious belief is changed by this process, people are not aware of it, and they cannot be convinced of it. It is much easier to refute doctrinal error than to correct spurious religious feeling. Religious experience should not be left to ignorant persons, nor should it be treated in a slovenly, careless, or common-place manner ; but the art of preaching it should be cultivated by earnest reflection, and by careful study of the religious affections. Such studies will enrich all your other sermons, and also qualify you to act as spiritual advisers.

4th. Purely moral sermons should not be preached. A person does not care to have duties coldly presented to him ; he wishes to have them connected with religious principle, that he may feel the obligation to discharge them resting upon him. Such sermons being unevangelical and inadequate are lacking in both interest and power. The word "practical" is frequently used to denote sermons which merely set forth duty. But practical in its truest sense all preaching, and, indeed, all rhetorical discourse, must be. A sermon must be practical which increases our knowledge of God to whom we are accountable, or which enables us to feel more deeply the force of truth, or which produces or intensifies religious affection, or whose tendency is to make the outwardly good moral character holy.

5th. Special occasions will suggest valuable subjects. But such occasions should not be multiplied. Funeral sermons are not desirable. The minister is placed at a great disadvantage, being expected to make a great

effort without sufficient time to prepare for it. It is damaging to a minister not to be able to say anything. Better far, take an old sermon, being careful not to state that it is an old sermon, nor to apologize for it. There is risk of either offending the friends of the deceased or of compromising the truth. The subject of the sermon should be some impressive or consolatory doctrine, not the character of the deceased. If he was a truly pious man the fact may be incidentally noticed and improved. If he was not, it is surely wrong to speak of his excellent social qualities, and then say, we must leave him to the mercy of God. The advantages of funeral sermons are that they are spoken to a seriously impressed audience and in the hearing of many who do not attend church.

6th. Controversial sermons, or even sermons which have a controversial tone, are in general not edifying. While the right to defend truth and to refute error is fully recognized and maintained, yet the difficulty is to determine when controversial sermons should be preached. (a) Sound rhetoric forbids us to refute errors that are not current among our hearers, or which are purely speculative, as rhetoric must not be speculative, and it must be adapted to our hearers' state of mind. It is presumed that few of our hearers hold very serious errors. It is not well to neglect the edification of the Church for the sake of such persons, especially as by formal refutation we are apt to give undue importance to errors, and either to exasperate those who hold them or flatter their vanity. (b) Were we to succeed in removing all speculative error from a hearer's mind, he would still need to be converted to God. Now, a man by divine grace may be as easily brought from scepticism to the exercise of saving faith

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as to the exercise of merely historical faith. It is a poor thing to be satisfied with wounding or silencing an opponent. The victory thus achieved is one which Christ will not recognize or accept ; His desire is to convert an enemy into a friend. (c) There is also, in the case of formal refutation, danger of giving currency and publicity to error ; and also, by over-refutation, of producing a reaction in its favour, and leading people to suppose that there is vitality and power in it. Apologetic preaching tends to shake the faith of an audience. A complaining tone in reference to prevailing scepticism is most damaging. We should preach as men who have confidence in the Word and Spirit of God ; and our words should have the accent of conviction. Young ministers should not involve themselves or the Church inopportunely in controversy. They have generally neither the resources nor the prudence needed ; and they should know that an unskilful advocate damages a cause. The question is a difficult one. This, even Solomon admitted ; for he tells us not to answer a fool according to his folly, and also to answer him thus. Christian prudence should be used, and divine direction should be sought. *Magna est veritas et praevalebit.* (d) But the greatest difficulty is to deal with latent error, which seems to be very closely related to truth, and indeed is incorporated with it. If by careful explanation it could be detached from the truth and clearly presented, it would not need to be refuted, but so long as it is incorporated with truth in men's minds, mere refutation will not dislodge it. *E.g.,* Many are opposed to what the Bible teaches in reference to divine decrees or purposes, because they believe that it is incompatible with human accountability. Others are opposed to justification by the imputation of

Christ's righteousness, because they believe that this must lead to antinomianism, hence all their just opposition to the latter is directed against imputation. Others are opposed to preaching justification by faith alone, because they do not understand the nature of the faith referred to. If truth could be freed from all alloy, the very statement of it would be sufficient proof of it. Were latent error detected and clearly presented, it would refute itself.

7th. General suggestions in reference to finding subjects and texts. It is useful to form a little system of subjects, such as the Christian graces; or Christian Ethics, as in Eph. iv: 25-32; or the Biographies of eminent men, as in Hebrews xi. It might be well to take a system of Christian doctrine as in the Shorter Catechism, beginning at effectual calling, using its outlines as mere landmarks. It might be followed in connection with systematic reading. But this plan should not be disclosed to the congregation, nor should it have the rigidity and formality of a doctrinal system. This might furnish one subject a week for two years; *i.e.*, supposing that miscellaneous subjects should be freely interspersed. This might be demanded by the special study required for some of the consecutive subjects, by pressing ministerial engagements, and by special services. At the end of two years, the whole series might be re-studied, re-written, corrected and embellished. Blanks might be filled up and redundancies might be cut off, and the whole might be enriched with your increasing knowledge and experience, making it cover the second time three years. At the end of this period repeat the process. But the work would become lighter at every repetition of the process, as less change would be required, in many cases, none at all. It might

be of use to change the texts occasionally. This would secure far greater variety, and conduce more to the edification of both pastor and people than the usual way of choosing subjects and texts. Many think that there is great variety in their preaching merely because there is great variety in their texts. This is a mistake. To secure real variety it must be found in the subjects. Besides, additional variety might be had in the miscellaneous subjects discussed at one service every Sabbath.

Further, it might be well to keep a book in which subjects might be recorded as they occur to you; and also texts connected with them, and any method that might have presented itself. Many keep a book for texts, but they grow tired of it, as it is found to be of little practical utility. The reason is that they fail to find, or record, a subject in such texts as pleased them. Moreover, the regular study of Scripture in the original would suggest many valuable subjects, which would not otherwise be thought of. These would be always fresh, and would bear the impress of your own mind.

Chapter III. The *Unity* and the *Invention* of the Subject. Unity is essential in any work of art. An edifying and impressive discourse cannot be constructed on several subjects. The very life of a discourse is in its unity. Unity requires that there be one leading idea to which every thing is subordinated. Unity is not unicity, but it is the result of union, the union of parts in one whole. It is not absolute and simple, but relative and complex, a unity of different parts, the relation of which to each other and to the whole, can be perceived at one view. *E.g.*, "The rest that Christ gives" has unity, although it comprises all the elements of this rest. "The blessedness of the

saints in Heaven" has unity, although it comprises seeing God, enjoying God as their portion and doing His will. This analysis is psychological. The proposition, "Christ gives His people rest," has unity. By directing all your arguments to prove this, you secure unity, no matter how numerous the arguments may be, provided they are co-ordinate or lie in the same field of view.

Intelligent and serious hearers demand unity. Each hearer of this class, unconsciously to himself, will endeavour to give unity to a discourse to which the preacher has not given it; or will attach himself to one of the preacher's ideas; or will perhaps force all these ideas to take the direction which pleases his own mind. Thus the preacher, who for want of diligence or skill, fails to impart unity to his subject, imposes too great labour on his audience, and defeats his own purpose.

To secure unity three simple rules may be helpful:

1st. Reduce your subject to the form of a proposition, stated in the fewest, simplest and most forcible words. The doctrinal proposition is easily transformed into a practical one. In this concentrated form, any incongruous element may be readily detected. But this test is not infallible, as you may preach on one word, and not have unity. *E.g.*, If you take "sanctification" you may preach on its meaning, on the means by which it may be effected, on its relation to justification, or on the blessedness for which it qualifies the soul; four subjects.

2nd. Have a definite object in view, or impression to be produced. A rhetorical subject is more definite than a logical one. *E.g.*, "The Bible is inspired" is logical. "I purpose to explain the nature of inspiration" or "I purpose to prove that the Bible is

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inspired " is rhetorical. A theme which has no relation to a subject practically important, or which can not be made so without painful effort, is not a proper basis for a rhetorical discourse. Rhetorical unity is different from didactic in this, that all the elements it combines have for their last term a practical application or conclusion.

3rd. Have one principle on which analysis or division is made in explanation ; and one principle on which arguments are invented or arranged in confirmation. This will prevent cross divisions, it will eliminate incongruous elements, and it will unite and consolidate the whole sermon.

Notice that (a) Unity is not confined to the subject, but it must pervade the whole sermon. The method, the arrangement of arguments and illustrations must be with supreme reference to the leading design of the sermon, towards which everything must be made to converge. (b) Strict unity must be maintained even in sermons on extended passages. One leading idea must be seized and everything subordinated to it. This subordination implies no depreciation, as it is not ethical, but rhetorical. The laws of co-ordination and sub-ordination must be observed in the interest of unity. They will guide you even when unity does not exist, as in duty and motives. To have strict unity you must determine whether you wish mainly to explain a duty, or to enforce it, and allow the main idea to be conspicuous and to lead. E.g., In " thou shalt not bear false witness " you would naturally make the explanation of the duty prominent, as it is not generally understood, the motives being subordinated to this. (c) When the subject may be viewed in different aspects, or when the text contains several ideas of great value,

the selection of the one to be made prominent must be determined by the impression you wish to produce. Anything incompatible may be waived. *Cicero* attached much importance to having a definite subject and purpose. He said, "When after hearing and understanding a cause, I proceed to examine the subject matter of it, I settle nothing until I have ascertained to what point my whole speech, bearing immediately on the question of the case, should be directed."

The *Invention of the Subject*. "Standing between the Word of God and the special wants of the congregation, the minister must choose his theme according to his spiritual perception at the time, and his peculiar disposition. However obvious in the circumstances a text may appear, yet the subject itself, the theme, is always a discovery, or rather a gift of the Lord, a message to the Church."—*Lange*. *General conditions favourable to the invention of subjects for sermons.* (a) A competent knowledge of Theology. Cicero insisted that an orator must be a man of learning and universal information, and although his knowledge of many subjects must be superficial, yet he must thoroughly understand Ethics, Law, and Politics. The celebrated orators of antiquity were generally lawyers or statesmen. The preacher of the Gospel is bound to acquire a thorough knowledge of Theology. This will fertilize his mind, and furnish material on which the inventive faculty may work. (b) A knowledge of the opinions and feelings that prevail among his hearers, or their character and states of mind. This will enable him to invent subjects suited to their edification ; thus they will be fresh and interesting, and fitted to attach themselves to what is favourable, and to correct what is not. It is neglect of this fundamental rhetorical principle that raises learned men above their

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hearers, destroys sympathy, and leads people to prefer illiterate men who can enter into their views, although their power of edifying is small and temporary. (c) A mind enjoying, or sincerely seeking, the guidance of the Holy Spirit. A mind in a right spiritual state sees the glory and beauty of spiritual objects, and a depth of meaning in the Word of God which is most favourable to the invention of precious and affecting subjects.

Specific Conditions of Invention. (a) An accurate knowledge of your text. It is only thus you can discover its specific meaning. If your attention is concentrated on your text for a considerable time your diligence and labour will often be rewarded by the discovery of a valuable subject. You must not skip over the text, but dig therein to the very bottom, as in a gold mine. (b) An impression of the value of the principle contained in the text. There is a kind of instinct, which seems often to guide in the discovery of the subject. This kind of susceptibility is not continuous, but occasional and spasmodic. Full advantage should be taken of it, when it occurs and while it lasts. Such inspiration is often worth days of study. Its process and results should be written down instantly for future study and use. (c) An earnest desire to promote your hearers' edification. This will not only awaken interest and stimulate invention, but it will raise the mind above all selfish feelings and vanity, and, by inflaming it with benevolence, will aid invention.

The Process of Invention Itself. This is not easy to analyze. It includes deep meditation and concentration of all the powers of the mind. It implies close, earnest, and protracted attention, by which all irrelevant thoughts and feelings are excluded. If this is persevered in with steadiness, decision, and courage, a subject will,

in due time, begin to appear in the matter on which you are gazing. By persevering and intense looking it will gradually become clearer. The mind will shed light on what is its own creation, and the subject will reflect light on the mind itself. In course of time, both the subject and the mind will be filled with light, and the subject will appear clear and distinct. This labour must not be shirked, but it must be continued until the subject is fully discovered and till the heart is inflamed by it. In this process a thoroughly disciplined mind is a law to itself. There is a kind of habitual preparation for invention in a thorough and continual study of the flock, of human life, of ourselves, and of the Bible ; in a habit of disciplining our mind and arranging our ideas which will never leave us at a loss. *Cicero* says : " In speaking, three things are required in finding arguments, genius, method, and diligence. Diligence is to be particularly cultivated by us ; it is to be constantly exerted ; it is capable of effecting almost anything."

The inventive faculty may be strengthened by exercise. It may be greatly aided by a knowledge of the laws of thought, of logical division, analysis, and comparison ; and of the various kinds of proof and of arguments. Thus qualified and inspired by a high purpose, it will be able to work intelligently ; and, in course of time, easily and successfully. The mind acting thus imparts to the subject organic structure, which is the condition of its becoming a living thing. In this lies the great labour of making a discourse ; what remains to be done is a labour of love. Those who use published outlines of sermons do not acquire inventive or creative power, and they doom themselves to a life of perpetual drudgery and plagiarism.

What has been explained is the *direct process* of invention. It is suited to cultivated minds having ample resources, and also the power and habit of concentrated thought. But there is an *indirect process* suited to persons who have not these qualifications. It consists in consulting all available commentaries on the subject aimed at, and meditating on them, the mind selecting and arranging what seems congenial to it. In this way a subject is invented and by meditation made your own. After the subject is partially invented by the indirect process, many are able to complete the invention by the direct process. This is most desirable; persevering study is thus almost equal to genius.

Characteristics of subjects when invented. I. Objective: The subject must be valuable, a real discovery. Even in texts in which a subject is distinctly stated, there must be laborious thinking that you may discover the full content of the terms and the relation existing between them. Thus there is the labour of invention, whether what you seek lies on the surface of the earth or at the bottom of a well. Mere conceits are not true discoveries; they are the fruits of perverse or misapplied ingenuity. *Illustrations:* "By grace are ye saved." To convert this into a proposition, "Salvation is gratuitous," is a merely verbal discovery. This must be subjected to severe thought, *e.g.*, what is included in salvation? In what respect is it gratuitous? Shall we prove the statement, say, by divine testimony and by human experience? or, shall we prove it in detail, by proving its various parts to be gratuitous? In this last case I must analyze it, and prove that calling, justification, sanctification, and spiritual blessedness, now and hereafter, are gratuitous. Your subject has now an organic structure, and you know what your resources are, and

how you are affected by the subject.—Isaiah liii : 11.
(a) " He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied,"—Christ's satisfaction with the result of His sufferings. We may be glad to have His judgment, as He only can estimate His sufferings and their stupendous results. You may view the satisfaction as : first, relative ; second, absolute. *E.g.*, a man who has purchased a farm may be satisfied with his bargain, as he thinks he has got the worth of his money, *i.e.*, he is relatively satisfied, but he would like to have a far better farm, *i.e.*, he is not absolutely satisfied. The eye of faith is thus directed to Christ's knowledge, and then to His love to His people. Thus the movement here, the under current, is from understanding to affection. Underlying this, there are the grand proofs of Christ's love revealed in His sufferings for His people, and in the blessedness which He desires and secures for them. II. Chonicles xii. : 14, " Applying the heart to seek the Lord, the condition of a truly good man." (1) Applying the heart, etc., etc., means a most earnest desire to enjoy God's favour—great steadfastness of purpose. (2) The condition, etc., etc., (a) because they that truly seek the Lord must hate evil ; (b) they are brought under the most powerful motives to do His will ; and they have the promise of all needed grace to help them. N.B.—A negative statement is here converted into a positive, which is most desirable. There is a casual relation here which secures unity ; and there is movement from understanding and desire to strenuous effort. Matt. xi. : 5, last clause, " Distinctive characteristic of Christ's Messiahship." Reasons. 1st. The religion of Christ is not intended for a favoured class, but for the human race—the great mass in all ages being poor—Christ's religion being the only universal religion that ever

existed. 2nd. The poor are the best prepared to receive and welcome it.

II. *Subjective.* "The subject must be suited to the preacher's spiritual perception at the time and to his peculiar disposition." It must exactly correspond to the state of the mind that invented it. Thus the preacher holds firmly and confidently the idea embodied in his subject; he realizes its value and force; and he is affected by it as he desires his hearers to be affected. It is only thus he can compose and speak with affection. This is a specific characteristic of great value. As his spiritual perceptions and dispositions may vary very much, a valuable subject may lose its suitableness to his spiritual state. Hence, he will not be able to write and deliver it as he ought. A preacher should not be content to invent a valuable subject, but he must seek to have his mind imbued and inflamed by it at the time of composing as well as of delivering it. This accounts for the fact that he often delivers an old sermon with greater comfort and power than a new one. Hence M. Coquerel said that "a man's best sermon is the one of which he is most thoroughly master."

PART II. THE DISCUSSION OF THE SUBJECT.

It is now assumed that we have a definite subject and purpose. The *Discussion* may be divided into two parts: *Method* and *Rhetorical Development*. It is by *Method*, i.e. explanation and proof, that all the interest and persuasive power contained in your subject—or as much of it as may serve your purpose—may be brought out. It is by Rhetorical Development that this can be applied to the whole mind of your hearers. Thus the one indicates an objective, the other a subjective process. Method has to do with *explanation and confirmation*.

tion addressing the understanding; and Rhetorical Development has for its aim *excitation and persuasion*,—addressing the emotions and will. The whole mind is thus addressed. The grouping of these processes in pairs gives that prominence to method to which it is entitled in preaching the Gospel; and it connects most closely excitation and persuasion, which should never be separated in religious discourse.

Chapter I. *Method.* The Scholastic Method may be stated for the sake of illustration, as it is strictly logical. This requires that a strict proposition be constructed, and that the Heads of discourse be the subject, predicate, and copula. It is clear that if you explain the subject and predicate, and establish the copula by proof, all is done that can possibly be done. *E. g.*, “Great patriots are courageous.” 1. Who are great patriots? 2. In what sense courageous is predicated of them. 3. Prove the statement. The faults of this method are that it does all these three things in one discourse, produciug intolerable sameness; and making the main subject always one of three heads; and that while it states what should be explained and proved, it throws no light on either process. Whereas, if you wish to prove a proposition, you can explain the subject and predicate in the introduction, and then establish the copula by a series of proofs which will furnish the main outlines of the sermon; or should the proof be ‘analytic’, *i.e.*, contained in the terms of the proposition, the mere explanation of the terms will show their agreement, so that arguments will not be needed. It is clear that in proving the statement “God is love,” you must adduce synthetic proof; while in the statement, “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer,” you find proof that is analytic, *i.e.*, in the terms

of the proposition. So also, "Duelling was a crime of the Dark Ages" (synthetic). "Duelling is murder," (analytic). It is possible to combine the two kinds of proof, which should then be the two main heads, *e.g.*, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord," etc. etc. 1. Proof, the congruity between dying in the Lord and being blessed (analytic). 2. Proof, the testimony of the Spirit (synthetic). In this case, of course, the discourse is called confirmatory. If it were made on the first proof alone, it would be explanatory. The Scholastic Method is valuable because it shows all that can be done in discoursing on a subject. Its main defect also shows the necessity of determining how you are to treat a subject,—whether your main purpose is to explain or prove it. This will determine whether its outlines are to be explanatory or confirmatory, or both combined.

Explanation in General.—We shall—leaving out percepts—confine our attention to the logical products of thought, *i.e.* concepts and abstracts. These can be logically explained, and they contain most of our knowledge in a concentrated form. These concepts are called class-words, general terms, or universals. If you state the species or the individuals included in the class you divide it logically or explain it through its species. *E.g.*, you explain "great patriots" by logical division by naming Moses, Brutus, Washington, etc. These must be coördinate, and when put together they are supposed to constitute the class. Any one of the species or individuals is entitled to the name of the class; *e.g.*, Moses was a great patriot. Divide man as a class or universal, and you have ethnologically Caucasian, Mongolian, Malay, Ethiopian, and American Indian; or, geographically, European, African, American, etc., etc.

A class is formed by adding two or more subjects having a common predicate. *E.g.*, Plato is rational animal ; Socrates is rational animal ; Cicero is rational animal ; thus a class is formed and it is designated "Man," the judgments out of which it is formed being allowed to drop. Thus you explain a class, or universal, or general term, by stating the species or individuals—which are similar parts of it—of which it is composed. To effect this you view "man" in *extensive quantity* or in extension ; and you *explain* "man" by division when you state all the species ; in *exemplification*, you explain the class by stating one of its species ; in *comparison* or *contrast*, you explain the class by comparing or contrasting two of its species ; and indirectly by analogy, you explain not by comparing or contrasting things but their relations. Thus in generic forms of thought you have division, exemplification, comparison and contrast, and analogy. These are the chief means of rhetorical explanation. These furnish the main outlines of innumerable discourses, and also the outlines of subordinate parts. They are as indispensable to discourse as multiplication is to computation. If skill and facility in division are acquired, all these processes of explanation are easy. They impart fulness and richness to discourse and stimulate invention.

On the other hand, it is easy to see that as a class is necessarily bound together by some common attributes, these attributes can be subjected to *analysis*. *E.g.*, the class "patriots" is formed by uniting those *who ardently love their country*. "Man" as a class is formed of those who are united by all the attributes included in *rational animal*. It is on these *as its base* the class is formed. Without the common attribute they could not be formed into a class at all. Now,

when the common attribute is subjected to analysis, the class is viewed in *comprehension* or in comprehensive quantity, and the analysis reveals the simpler attributes of which the complex attribute or bundle of attributes is composed. This I purpose to call "*analysis*." This is not strictly correct, as the meaning of analysis is more extensive even than division. But I cannot find a more suitable term, and I shall use analysis in this sense only. By this we reach attributes, not species; and one attribute cannot have the name of the complex attribute. *E.g.*, "Man" viewed in comprehension is composed of the attributes included in "rational animal." By subjecting "rational" to analysis, we have understanding, sensibility, and will. *N.B.* The common subject in a concept, viewed in comprehension, is called *its base*; and the common predicate in a concept, viewed in extension, is called *its base*. *E.g.*, To analyze "Man," you must find the principle of analysis in the base; thus, "mankind depraved" may be *analyzed* as blind to all that is spiritually good, alienated from God and holiness, and rebellious against God's authority. Thus the depravity pervades all his faculties of mind. To *divide* mankind you must find the principle of division in the base, *i.e.*, some attribute found in rational or in animal, *i.e.*, either in his mind or in his body. As these attributes are innumerable, you can easily select one suited to your purpose, whether it be psychological or physiological.

An *abstract* can be properly viewed, not in extension, as it is not a class-word, but only in comprehension—as it is an attribute word. An abstract has no base, hence there is no subject that furnishes the principle of analysis. Help may be obtained by converting the abstract into a universal or a class. *E.g.*, "God is

love." Love is an abstract. Convert it into the class "benevolent," God being included in this class and standing at the very head of it. The question then is, How does God manifest His benevolence? 1st. He is complacent to the good. 2nd. He is merciful to the sinful, and compassionate to the miserable. Hence "love" here may be analyzed into complacency, mercy, and compassion. There are two classes here—the good and the not good.

It is required that the principle of division or analysis found in the base be not only suited to your purpose, but that it be *one*. E.g., If you divide man as accountable, you must adopt a moral principle; if nationally, another principle; if according to his relation to mankind, another principle, etc., etc. But if you adopt several principles, there will be hopeless confusion, as when you divide mankind thus: Hypocrites, Europeans, Negroes, Frenchmen, ignorant persons, murderers, Roman Catholics, and blacksmiths. Divisions made on several principles are called cross-divisions. They are often unconsciously made in abstract themes. The confusion thus introduced into a discourse is proportionate to the number of the principles, and to the degree of their mutual incompatibility. It is a matter of much importance to keep in view and to hold fast the four leading classes of attributes. These are the *essential attributes* of *quality and causation*; and the *relative attributes* of *condition and relation*.

Methods may be divided into two classes according to their form: The *Simple* and the *Complex*.

Section I. The *Simple Method*. This is strictly logical. It is a method in which there is a single idea or a definite subject that can be accurately and fully stated in a brief title; and in which the heads are fur-

nished either by the logical division or the analysis of the theme ; or by a series of proofs or arguments. Thus these discourses are either explanatory or confirmatory in their outline, but never both. They are adapted to make a definite impression.

1. *Explanatory.* In this the theme is viewed (a) in *extension*, and divided by stating the specific or similar parts of which it is composed ; or (b) in *comprehension*, and is analysed by presenting its component attributes. N.B. Rules to be observed in logical division : 1. The constituent parts must exclude one another. 2. They must, when added, be equal to the genus. 3. Division must be founded on one principle or basis. 4. Sub-ordinate species must be contained under the super-ordinate. Rule to guide in logical analysis,—That none but co-ordinate characters, and all of them, be distinguished. Logical division. (a) II Cor. v : 10, first clause, "The judgment will be universal ; all must be there." I. Those to whom it is properly alarming, 1st. Those who live in the practice of sin—the ungodly and the immoral. 2nd. Those in addition to this who refuse God's salvation—sceptics, self-righteous persons, or self-deceivers. (This distinction was made by the Lord, Matt. xi : 20-24.) II. Those to whom it will be most desirable, as they will then be acknowledged and acquitted, etc., etc. The four rules are all respected in this. II Peter 1 : 4, first clause, "Promises exceeding great and precious," a class. I. Promises of spiritual blessings to be enjoyed now, justification, grace needed to sanctify, and fellowship with God. II. Promises of spiritual blessings to be enjoyed hereafter, admission into Heaven, seeing God, enjoying His favour, and serving Him. N.B. Other principles of division would give other component parts. *E.g.*, I.

Promises relating to temporal things. II. Promises relating to spiritual things. Or, I. Promises made to the Church. II. Special promises made to individuals. The first division is suited to the Apostles' meaning. In it all the rules are respected.

(b) In *comprehension*, by analysis. E.g., "Christian Benevolence," an abstract, make it a universal. "Benevolent" viewed in relation to Christians. Consider the manner in which they should act or feel towards others. They specially love persons of the same character with themselves; they are forgiving to those who injure them, not rendering evil for evil, but the opposite; they feel deeply for those who are miserable, especially spiritually miserable. "Christian benevolence," Fraternal love, and love to all mankind.

It is a great thing to be able to divide or analyse concepts or general notions and also abstracts. Our religious knowledge is mainly treasured up in abstracts. Salvation is an abstract; so is eternal life. "Piety towards God" is an abstract. It comprehends holy reverence towards Him; and also love of His character, including gratitude and dependence. "The influence of the Gospel on man as rational" is an abstract. 1. On the understanding, enlightening it in the knowledge of God and of divine things. 2. On the conscience and heart, stimulating and satisfying the conscience, and giving true peace. 3. On the will or disposition, changing or improving it. The complex nature of the abstract is here revealed in relation to the various parts of man's nature that are brought under the influence of the Gospel. There is here also an attribute of causation. The rule for analysis is complied with. There is here a principle at work enlightening, quickening, and moulding. "The

rest that Christ promises," Matt. xi : 28-30, is an abstract. 1. Rest from the working of a servile spirit produced by erroneous views of the ceremonial law, or of the moral law viewed as a covenant of works. 2. Rest from the spiritual conflicts of an awakened conscience. 3. Rest from moral strivings or aims, *i.e.*, rest prevading the whole mind. Thus by an attribute of relation the "rest" is analysed. Acts. xv : 3, last clause. "The great joy of all the brethren" is an abstract. 1st. Philanthropic joy, because the barrier was broken down, and Gentiles were brought into the Church. 2nd. Pious joy, because God was glorified, and because the harmony between the Old Testament Church and the New was demonstrated. "The disinterestedness of Moses" is an abstract. 1st. He refused Egyptian distinction and emolument, he was unwilling to be leader of Israel, and he never sought personal aggrandisement when promoted. 2nd. He devoted his thoughts and energies to the welfare of Israel, although his generosity was not appreciated, and to God's glory. A great many abstracts and notions in comprehension may be analysed by an attribute of relation. *But this demands that the things to which the relation refers be co-ordinate, reached on one principle, and exhausted.* If there be any mistake in this respect, the analysis will be confused, faulty, or defective. I Kings xix : 12, last clause. "The suitableness of the manner in which God addresses mankind, especially in the Gospel." This is an abstract. 1st. Suitable to the nature of the Gospel message. 2nd. Suitable to the affections and powers addressed, and to the Spirit's agency by which it is rendered effectual. (The relation here is to the remedy and the means of its application.) "The advantage of remembering

Christ's words by Christians in various states," Luke xxiv : 8. 1st. When they sink into comparative unbelief as the disciples had done. 2nd. When they are distressed by severe affliction or by guilt on the conscience. It would not do to add 3rd. When in the enjoyment of great spiritual happiness, as this would not be co-ordinate, because the other two refer to states of spiritual distress. Should it be desirable to introduce this element, the first analysis should be: 1st. When in spiritual distress. 2nd. When in the enjoyment of spiritual happiness. Then the former analysis might guide in the discussion of the first head. This simple method will do equally well for extended portions of Scripture; *e.g.*, Mark viii. : 1-21, "Our Lord's state of mind here referred to." 1st. His kindness and compassion towards the multitude, 1-9. 2nd. His grief in relation to the Pharisees, 10-13. His mortification and disappointment in relation to the disciples, 14-21.

2nd. *The Simple Confirmatory Method.* In this a statement *is proved* by a series of arguments, the distinct branches of which furnish the main outlines of a sermon. Luke xiv : 15-24, "There is nothing to exclude any one to whom the invitation is addressed from the feast referred to, except refusing the invitation." 1. Because no one will be excluded on account of personal unworthiness. 2. Because no one will be excluded for want of room, or of provision, or of willingness on the part of the Master to receive him. These proofs are co-ordinate and exhaustive. Romans vii : 7-13, "The inability of the law to destroy sin in the soul." 1. Because the law reveals sin. 2. Because the law exasperates sin, and thus furnishes the occasion of sin working death, exerting its most deadly power. I John iv : 9, 10, "Proof that God is love." 1. Be-

cause He sent His only begotten Son into the world to be a propitiation for our sins. 2. Because He sent His Son that we might live through Him, *i.e.*, enjoy spiritual life through Him, now and hereafter. These are the grand proofs of love—making sacrifices for the sake of its objects, and endeavoring to promote their happiness. These proofs are contained in the text ; they are exhaustive ; the relation here is love towards man as guilty, and love towards man as miserable. Jeremiah ii : 1-13, “The great wickedness of retrograding in a religious life.” 1. Because it reveals ingratitude towards God, specially aggravated in the case of the Israelites, in view of God’s great kindness towards them. 2. Because it was ruinous to themselves. The magnitude of the people’s sin should precede the statement of consequences. The bad quality is revealed ; 1st, in relation to God ; 2nd, in relation to themselves. Luke xi : 13, “The great encouragement the Lord gives to pray for the Holy Spirit.” 1st, Because the gift of the Holy Spirit is inexpressibly great ; it includes all spiritual “good things,” faith, repentance, spiritual life, comfort, preparation for Heaven. 2. Because we have the strongest assurance that such prayer will be heard, by divine faithfulness and the paternal love of God, His purpose to save sinners. Powerful incentives to seek a thing are furnished by its immense value, and the assurance that it is attainable. It would be easy to give this a complex form, and to show : 1. What is meant by giving the Holy Spirit. 2. What encouragements or motives we have to ask. Both methods are correct. But, were the complex method adopted, there would be a strong temptation to make the first Head purely didactic, and, while discussing it, to lose sight of the object you should have in view. Whereas, by

taking the simple method you are compelled when explaining to keep the end in view, *i.e.*, to lead people to pray for this gift. This would make a more powerful discourse, having greater directness of aim. The idea of " Possibility " in the second Head, would be a powerful incentive to prayer or effort. I Timothy iv: 8, " Godliness is profitable to all things." This may be considered a complex statement, and may be analyzed. 1. It is profitable in relation to this world. 2. In relation to the future world. Each of these might be proved by a series of arguments. In this case the body of the discourse would be proof, the analysis merely enabling you to prove the statement in detail. The process of division, or analysis, as the case may be, will guide in inventing and arranging arguments, and in securing unity and co-ordination among them. But when the arguments used prove equally all the parts of the complex statement, division or analysis should not be made. " The Sabbath was made for man " might be treated in the same way. 1st. Prove that the proper observance of it conduces to man's temporal welfare ; 2nd, that it conduces to his spiritual welfare.

Notes on simple methods : Explanatory and Confirmatory. 1st. Those given under " a " and " b " do not exhaust even logical explanation, as comparison and contrast are for the present omitted, because they do not generally furnish simple methods.

2nd. Explanation is of use not only in furnishing the outlines of methods, but also in discussing the heads, and the subordinate parts of all sermons, and even in rhetorical amplification for the sake of impression.

3rd. Although it is necessary to distinguish explanatory from confirmatory methods, yet explanation and proof are very closely related and they sustain one

another. We may have to explain proof and to prove explanation. Besides, explanation makes the point at issue clear, and thus facilitates proof; and sometimes it makes proof unnecessary by removing prejudices, and causing truth to shine with its own light. When proof is analytic, explanation is all that is needed. Moreover, proof that is relevant tends to limit and explain. *E.g.*, You cannot properly prove that God is merciful, without, by this very process, explaining His mercy. In fine, proof and illustration are often used indifferently for the sake of impression. We may explain what our hearers understand, and prove what they believe, provided that by doing so we can interest them and keep the truth for a considerable time in living contact with their minds, so that they may feel its power.

Section II. Complex Methods. These are commonly called Textual. But the name is misleading, as simple methods may not only explain the Text, but also exhaust it. If a Textual sermon is one whose heads are expressed in the very words of the text, there will either be few such sermons, or the division or analysis will be mechanical. A textual sermon, properly so called, is one in which the ideas stated in the text—or as many of them as can be united in one plan, form the Heads ; the other ideas, should there be any, being either subordinated or waived. This is what a textual sermon should be. It might thus have strict unity and other rhetorical qualities. But as these limitations, by subordinating or by waiving, are both theoretically and practically ignored, a textual sermon may not possess rhetorical qualities at all. Thus the term "textual" has become so indefinite and misleading that I decline to use it. I shall therefore use, instead of it, Complex, *i.e.*, not simple.

Complex Methods.—Heb. iv : 11, “Great encouragement to labour to enter into the rest spoken of.” 1. The Christian life involves great labour. 2. The rest will more than compensate for it. To secure unity, either the labour or the rest should be analyzed, so that the latter may be seen to compensate for the former. *E.g.*, the labour or unrest of the Christian life, 1st, includes all the internal conflicts with sin which are connected with sanctification ; 2nd, it includes all the external dangers and trials to which the Christian is exposed. Now, the rest should be shown to compensate for both, as in Heaven the soul will be perfectly holy, it will also be safe and blessed. The Heads must not be discussed as little essays but in relation to one another. The first Head of this discourse is subjected to analysis ; the second Head is proved. The complex nature of this method is evident, as it includes the two simple methods of explanation and proof. The great difficulty in such cases is to secure unity.

Complex methods should be constructed with supreme reference to persuasion. This general idea will guide in the treatment of very many texts and subjects. In these (a) a duty and motives are both included ; or (b) a principle and its workings ; or (c) a course of conduct and its consequences ; or (d) one thing as the condition of another ; or (e) one thing contrasted with another. It is not meant that this enumeration is exhaustive, as it is not based on any logical principle. It may, however, be practically of great utility and of extensive application. Whatever the complex form may be, it should be logically discussed according to the Logical methods explained in “Simple Methods.”

Examples: (a) Job xlvi : 7-10, "The duty of intercessory prayer." I. The duty is stated here expressly, is inculcated by the Lord and His Apostles, and it is exemplified by David and Paul. 2. Motives. Immense advantages of it (1) to persons prayed for. To the Church—examples: the prayers of Moses and David, of the disciples before Pentecost. To individuals: Job's friends pardoned. (2) To persons praying thus: Job's affliction redressed, it fosters brotherly kindness and forgiveness, and reminds us of our need of Christ's intercession, and it is a condition of our obtaining forgiveness. The first head is directly proved and exemplified in Scripture. The second head is exhaustively explained by analysis, according to an attribute of relation. N.B. The discourse should not be equally divided between duty and motives, as this would impair unity and make the sermon weak in the middle. The one should be made prominent. The question is whether will it best suit your purpose to discuss the duty mainly, or the motives mainly?

(b) I Timothy i. : 15, last clause, "The influence which the Apostle's deep and abiding sense of unworthiness exerted on his whole life after his conversion." I. Endeavour to account for his deep consciousness of personal unworthiness: (1) by the deep conviction of sin and rich experience of grace connected with his conversion; (2) by continuous consciousness of indwelling sin. II. The influence which this exerted on his whole life. (1) It kindled in his heart a flame of love to Christ that could not be extinguished; (2) it incited and qualified him to labour for the conversion of sinners,—having himself experienced the efficacy of the blood and Spirit of Christ; (3) it produced anxiety in reference to his own spiritual state.

The first head relates to his state of mind at conversion and after it. The second head is analysed by an attribute of causation, or by *Causal Analysis*. This gives as its results causal parts, *i.e.*, effects of the concept viewed as a cause. The rule is that "none but coördinate effects, and all of them, be distinguished." Complied with here—solicitude for the glory of Christ, the salvation of his fellow-men, his own salvation. If the discussion in *Causal Analysis* is confined to the orderly statement of causal parts, the method is "simple" *Causal Analysis* furnishes an illustration of the manner in which *biographical* subjects should be treated. They come under the head of narration, which is a kind of explanation, in which the theme is presented in the relation of time, as something becoming or changing. It is not a product of thought, as a concept or an abstract, but an integrate or concrete, *i.e.*, an object as it exists in nature, invested with all its attributes. Thus, the subject of narration is different from the subject of division or analysis. The theme is either simple, consisting of what is outward and sensible; or abstract, consisting of what is internal or spiritual, as conversion, the working of pride, or the formation of character and habit. *E.g.*, if you notice any great change in a man's character or any peculiar and valuable feature, and present it clearly, and trace it to the working of some principle as its cause and make a practical application of the whole, the discourse will be interesting and edifying, otherwise it will not be so. *E.g.*, The life of Moses furnishes a fine *example* of *meekness*. Numbers xii: 3, whether it ever failed may be disputed. Chap. xi: 10-15; xx: 11-12, may refer rather to the failure of faith, or to fear. I. His meekness was subjected to the severest tests, in view of his

exalted position, and the abundant revelations with which he was favoured ; and in view of the refractoriness of the people, and the envy of Aaron and Miriam. II. His meekness must be traced to deep and fervent piety, by which he was distinguished, as no other adequate cause can be assigned for it. Application.—Notice the practical utility of his example to us in times of trial or provocation, and of difficulty. The first head is explained according to an attribute of relation ; the second may be discussed according to an attribute of causation ; and the application may be explained by an attribute of relation. N.B. The meekness of Moses furnishes an exemplification of this quality. *Exemplification* is a process of logical explanation. It differs from division in this that instead of presenting all the specific parts which make up the theme, it presents one as an illustration. Instead of presenting the meek as a class, we present an individual belonging to it, who possesses this quality in an eminent degree. It is allowed to present several examples in a discourse without impairing unity, provided that they be examples of the same quality, that they be used only in reference to it, and that they be kept distinct. In this case the method of division is to be respected. In exemplification you must respect not only the end in view and the nature of the subject, but also your own resources, and the character and knowledge of your hearers. This seems to be the only manner in which a man's character can be the subject of rhetorical discourse. You can use it as the exemplification of some important quality, or of the working of some principle ; in either case it is not the man that is the true subject, but it is the quality or principle. It may be said that a man's character may be described. True, but *Description* has always for its

theme an object existing in space, an integrate whole, conceived of, or pictured in the mind as such. Hence, in description, being presented in the relations of space, and merely as existing, it has no movement ; it is not like a theme in narrative which is becoming or changing in time, but it is fixed in space. Hence, it is suited to the natural sciences and to poetry, but not to oratory. The orator in describing loses sight of his hearers, and lavishes all his power and affection on his own ideal. It is suited to what Aristotle calls "epideictic" and Cicero calls "demonstrative" discourse. It is fitted to amuse or please, not to persuade.

Description is not suited to the abstract themes that the preacher has to discuss. The forming of an adequate mental picture of such is impossible. Who can form a mental image of law, of truth, of right, of government, of learning, etc, etc.? Description is of use to the sensational preacher who seeks to address the passions directly by presenting vividly to the imagination some terrible or desirable object ; but to one who desires to excite moral or religious affection, it is unsuitable. It is used by those who aim at a pictorial style of composition and delivery. But it is not in this way the true orator imparts vivacity to discourse.

(c) Romans viii : 13, "Christians should live after the Spirit and mortify the deeds of the body." I. Exhortation to mortify the deeds of the body through the Spirit. Explain this. II. Consequences : (1) To live after the flesh is a state of spiritual death. (2) To live after the spirit and mortify the deeds of the body is to live, to enjoy spiritual life that will never end.
(d) Acts ii : 42-47, "The spiritual prosperity of the Church is the condition of its influence for good, and of its own stability." I. Elements of the Church's

spiritual prosperity are, 1, Cordial belief of the truth ; 2, Union in Christian love and benevolence ; 3, Diligent use of the means of grace, and patient continuance in well doing. II. These are the conditions, etc. 1. They commend the Gospel and make the Church attractive. 2. They render the Church steadfast by confirming the faith and comforting the hearts of believers. In the first head there is analysis; in the second there is proof.

(e) When resemblances between species of the same class are indicated, it is called *Comparison*; when differences are pointed out, it is called *Contrast*; and when the resemblance is not between species as in the former cases, but between their relations, it is called *Analogy*. Luke v: 33-39, "Our Lord's method of reforming men illustrated by contrast with that of the Pharisees." I. The Lord dealt with the understanding and the conscience; they dealt with deportment and the performance of external religious rites. II. The Lord's reformation was universal and progressive; theirs was partial and complete at once. When comparison or contrast furnishes the principle of division, it is not well to divide the discourse in the middle, presenting first the object itself, and then that which is contrasted with it—as 1st, the Lord's method of reformation; 2nd, that of the Pharisees. This tends to impair unity and to enfeeble the sermon in the middle, and also to make the second Head merely a converse repetition of the first. It is better to state together the points contrasted, so that the contrast may run through the whole length of the sermon. There are the same objections to stating, 1st, what a thing is; 2nd, what it is not. Besides, such a principle of division might lead to extraordinary results. What is really meant is, what

a thing is frequently mistaken for, and what it truly is. Show what a thing truly is in your discussion, and correct misapprehensions as you advance.

Note on the treatment of Figurative Texts.—Two extremes are to be avoided. The one is presenting the moral in an abstract form, and dismissing all allusion to the figure; the other is allegorizing and dividing the figure, and seeking fanciful analogies. In the one case, no advantage is taken of the figure, and hearers are disappointed; in the other, the whole sermon becomes a play of fancy, often offending good taste, and sometimes making the whole performance ridiculous. A middle course is to make the moral the true basis of discourse, and to adopt a form which will preserve the spirit of the figure. It is not necessary, in an abstract manner, to discuss the truth that the Christian life demands very great effort; nor, on the other hand, to illustrate it by reference to military tactics. Luke xiii: 6-9, "Religious privileges must be improved, fruits corresponding to them must be produced or the consequences must be fatal." I. God expects fruit; the very delay in cutting down the tree is with the view of using means to produce fruit. II. The unfruitful tree will be cut down, not only as useless, but also as injurious. I Timothy vi: 12, I. The nature of the spiritual conflict, and the great Ally on whose guidance and help we may depend. II. The glorious reward of victory, and the eternal disgrace and misery of defeat. Rules: (a) Strive to understand the subject lying under the figure, and the particular point that the figure is intended to illustrate, and use it only in this aspect. (b) Deal only with the higher analogies which are intended to present the subject clearly, and introduce no analogy, however beautiful, that will destroy the

unity of the subject. *Suggestions to aid in securing unity in Complex Methods.* 1. Make either duty or motives the more prominent. 2. Discuss the Heads in the same line. 3. See that one tone or spirit pervade the whole.

Note on Expository Sermons.—A sermon of this kind is in Scotland called a lecture. This fails to indicate that it should be a sermon or rhetorical discourse, and also to distinguish it from other sermons. Originally, it was a kind of paraphrase and commentary combined, without unity, method, or specific aim, although practical remarks were interspersed or added. What I mean by an expository sermon is one that is as strictly exegetical as is compatible with rhetorical qualities, and that finds not only its leading idea, but its whole matter in the text, which on this account generally embraces an extended passage of Scripture.

Its Method must be either simple or complex. The Simple Explanatory on Mark viii : 1-21 ; the Confirmatory on Luke xiv : 15-24, and on Romans vii : 7-13 ; and the Complex on Job xlvi : 7-10, and on Acts ii : 42-47 ; are suitable outlines for expository sermons. I maintain that they must have organic structure, and development, and definite practical aim, like other sermons. One great difficulty in such sermons is to secure unity in the subject. This can be aimed at by selecting a text which has unity in itself, by seizing a leading idea and subordinating all others to it, and by amplifying the most important thoughts in view of the end you wish to gain.

Another difficulty is to know what points to make prominent by explanation. If you explain everything the discourse will be purely didactic, and it will weary the hearers, leaving nothing to their judgment or

imagination to supply. If you explain everything equally, the discourse will have no salient points and no movement. It is a pity to increase these difficulties by loading your sermon with parallel passages, or with conflicting opinions of commentators. If you can explain a real difficulty, do so ; if not, pass on to what you can explain, giving the results of your exegetical research, not the process.

While there *must be method* in expository sermons, yet it should be as much conformed to the text as possible, and it should not be emphatically stated, as it is desirable that exposition should seem to take the lead. Expository preaching was customary in Old Testament times. II Chron. xvii : 7-9 ; Nehem. viii : 8. It was practised by the apostles. Justin, A.D. 150, tells us that it was customary in all the public services of Christians. It was the method of Chrysostom and Augustine. It continued until A.D. 1200. Then a more rhetorical style, revealing much ingenuity, and conformed to logical analysis, commenced ; and it lasted till the Reformation, when expository preaching was revived. It continued till recently in Presbyterian Churches in Scotland. To it was due their extensive knowledge of Scripture, their steadfastness in the faith, and their strong religious sentiments.

Its advantages are manifest. Ministers who addict themselves to it generally expound whole books or epistles consecutively. Thus "the whole counsel of God is declared," Acts xx : 27. "All Scripture is profitable," etc., etc., II Tim. iii : 14-17. Thus ample spiritual knowledge is provided for the people. They are deeply interested, and they are taught how to search the Scriptures for themselves. Difficult passages are explained, prejudices are removed, and perversions are

exposed. The whole edifice of saving truth is presented in its beauty and grandeur. This is much more profitable than the fragmentary manner in which truth is now generally preached. Hence people have "itching ears;" they lose relish for sound doctrine, they lack steadfastness, they are easily "carried about with every wind of doctrine."

It is of great value to ministers. It compels them to keep up their exegetical studies, and to master whole books of Scripture, and to study doctrines in the concrete form in which they are presented in the Bible, and in their connection and environment. It compels them to present all the great doctrines of revelation *in the proportion* in which they are found in the Bible. It thus secures endless variety, and keeps ministers from going round a little circle of doctrines that are congenial to their own minds. It leads them to enforce Scripture truth with divine and spiritual motives, and not with those derived merely from social and domestic life. Thus it teaches how to deal with the conscience. It presents an inexhaustible supply of illustrations derived from nature, indeed as many as they can use. They never will discover the treasures contained in the Bible until they study the whole of it consecutively. It enables them to preach doctrines peculiarly offensive to the carnal mind, and to reprove sins or faults without giving offence, because they are presented in the text, and are not specially sought for.

It fills their sermons with wholesome doctrine. It gives the minister commanding influence over his people. It enriches all his other sermons, and, in course of time, it makes him, as he should be, "mighty in the Scriptures."

Excellence in expository preaching cannot be attained without great and protracted labour. It is much more difficult to make expository sermons than other kinds of sermons. There are all the difficulties connected with ordinary sermons, with the addition of exegesis, and also preaching on texts that are prescribed, and which may be difficult.

Chapter II. Rhetorical Development.

This is specially with a view to excitation and persuasion. It is assumed that the affections lie between the understanding and the will ; hence, if you wish to persuade you must excite. Unless discourse is sensational, you must apply the truth which has persuasive power to the understanding by explanation and proof, and through the understanding you must excite emotion or affection, and thus influence the will ; either changing or improving the disposition, or stimulating to right action.

The process of excitation has been already partially indicated. We have shown how by explanation and proof the full meaning of the subject may be applied to the understanding ; and it is easy to see that this process must keep it in living contact with the mind for a considerable time, and thus excite interest and feeling. But this feeling may not be sufficiently lively or strong to serve our purpose, hence the specific point now to be considered is *how greater intensity of feeling is to be produced.*

We are clearly not to seek to excite feeling by departing from our subject, which contains persuasive power, nor by introducing extraneous matter, nor by presenting pictures to the senses or imagination. Nor are we to seek directly to control the will, which is impossible. Hence we must seek to strengthen feeling

and volition *by something in the manner of applying truth to the understanding.*

The question is merely one of degree of excitation, and hence it need not occasion any essential change in our procedure. The peculiarity referred to consists mainly of two things, *Rhetorical Movement* and *Adaptation* in its widest sense.

Section I. *Rhetorical Movement.* (a) The design of Movement is to bring the subject, with which you seek to persuade, into contact with the whole mind, the understanding, affections, and will; and that, too, always in the order now stated. It consists of the arrangement of parts reached by explanation and of arguments, so that they shall follow one another in natural order or shall increase in strength as they advance; and of the arrangement of the whole matter of discourse so that the movement shall be from general to specific, from abstract to concrete, or from objective to subjective.

So far as explanation is concerned, this has been illustrated in all the examples of methods already given. Thus in indicating the character of those to whom the judgment is properly alarming, the movement is from practising sin to self-deception. In considering the states of mind in which remembering Christ's words is beneficial, the movement is from partial insensibility to distress of conscience. In indicating the inability of the law to destroy sin in the soul, the movement is from revealing sin to sinking the sinner in distress of conscience or despair. The labour of the Christian life moves on to eternal rest. There is movement from duty to motives, from conflict to victory. There is a natural order in explaining before proving, or before setting forth the desirableness of a thing or the opposite.

The tendency of this movement is greatly to increase interest and affection ; and if the movement is gradual, there is growing intensity of feeling. Mistakes in reference to this are almost unpardonable. They are fitted to destroy a discourse and to exasperate an audience. This is a very common occurrence.

So far as the arrangement of arguments is concerned, it has also been illustrated in the confirmatory methods that have been given. Whately says that "it is the only thing that belongs exclusively to rhetoric ; and further, that it is perhaps not of less consequence in rhetoric than in the military art." That the *natural order* may be followed, the arguments should be classified. There are two great classes—the analytic and the synthetic. The analytic have demonstrative certainty, as they are found in the very terms of the proposition itself. If you explain the terms, their agreement is evident ; hence the importance of studying the meaning of a proposition ; hence also a clear statement often terminates controversy.

Synthetic proofs are divided into Intuitive and Empirical. Intuitive proofs are such as are furnished by the mind itself, acting under the laws of its being. They have demonstrative certainty. Empirical proofs are divided into, *a priori, signs and examples*. In *a priori* proof, we reason from a cause to its effect, or from a general law to its results. Supposing a fact admitted, if the proof assigned would account for it, it is *a priori* proof. In *signs*, we reason from an effect to its cause, or to the occasion of its operating. Among signs are testimony and authority, the one relating to facts, the other to opinions. Thus we do not suppose that the testimony would have been given had the fact not occurred, or that competent men would have pro-

nounced an opinion without valid reasons. If the testimony be concurrent, when collusion is impossible, it will be much stronger, and, in many cases, will be sufficient proof, although the witnesses, individually, have the reputation of being liars. The concurrent opinion of able men who have thoroughly examined a matter, is of great value and authority. *Examples* are proofs which are founded on the resemblance between individuals of the same class. They have a close affinity to *a priori* proofs. Both direct the mind to a cause or law, and both rest their validity as proofs on the assumed uniformity of the operations of nature.

Supposing that proofs of all these kinds are adduced in the same discourse—although very unlikely—the natural order after analytical proof is, 1st, intuitive ; 2nd, *a priori* ; 3rd, examples ; 4th, signs. The last two may change places, if more suitable to the structure of the discourse. When the arguments used are of the *same kind*, they should increase in strength. But here strength is a relative term ; it depends on the intelligence, prejudices or feelings of an audience at the time.

We are not to suppose that an argument having demonstrative force, although sufficient in logic, is sufficient in rhetoric. Arguments have to be accumulated to suit different, and to influence unwilling, minds. Proof is often explanatory ; it is also used to refute objections, to strengthen faith, and to produce an impression.

To the foregoing arrangement it is objected that, according to it, the testimony of God, in view of its nature and authority, must be put last. But surely it is not disrespectful to give it the position due to the strongest argument. Besides, it would seem to be disrespectful to place any other proof after it. But divine

testimony is generally the proof, and when other proof is connected with it, it is to remove objections or to help us to realize the truth.

It is also objected that in refutation it is better to put strong arguments at the beginning and at the end and weak ones in the middle. But in such a case it would be better to dispense with weak arguments, as an opponent would be sure to attack these and thus create a presumption against the others. There is a vexed question in reference to the position in which objections with which you may have to deal should be placed. If the objections spring from misapprehension of the state of the question, the point at issue, or the terms used, they should be disposed of at the outset. If they are directed against your arguments each should be disposed of in connection with the argument against which it is specially directed. But objections should not be allowed to stand together in solid phalanx, especially at the beginning or the conclusion of the discussion.

It may be well to state reasons in favour of the arrangement of arguments that has been indicated. It is evident that analytical proof should come before signs, etc., etc., as it clears the ground for the edifice you purpose to erect. It leads to the explanation of terms, defines the *status questionis*, and the point at issue. It thus greatly facilitates discussion. So far as logic is concerned, this proof might in many cases be sufficient; but it is not so rhetorically. In view of diversity of character, prejudices and strong feelings in an audience, a variety of proof is required. *A priori* proof raises a presumption in favour of the proposition in hand. The arguments from signs strengthen that presumption by showing that the thing that was likely to occur did

occur, and the arguments from example strengthen it still further by evidence of similar occurrences. Were *a priori* arguments placed last they might be supposed to be explanatory of a fact already proved, but not proof of it. It is most important to distinguish an example for explanation from an example for proof. The former may be an invented example; in the latter an attribute of causation must be recognized. No one should allow objections to stand together for mutual support; nor is one bound in debate to take up objections in the order in which an opponent places them unless it is his interest to do so.

(b) Further, movement must not be spasmodic, but continued or sustained, so that affection may not subside or be lost, but be preserved and accumulated. To be able to impart this movement is a far higher attainment than to excite spasmodic feeling. To secure continued movement the following things are necessary: 1st.—Positive. (a) The heads of discourse must be formed on one principle, as the principle running through the whole is the connecting link between them. This will secure harmony and continuity of feeling and prevent discord by which affections are brought into conflict and destroyed. (b) All that belongs to one head must be methodically arranged under it, so that its full force may be felt, and that it may bring an accession of interest and power. (c) Great care and skill must be used to make the transition from the discussion of one head to that of another. Oratorical genius is often conspicuous here. A happily chosen word or phrase is often sufficient, or even a fragment of the text. But if one cannot make this junction, he should not make the defect prominent by emphatically announcing the number of the head.

2nd. Negative. As the continuity of movement is of vital importance, several things fitted to arrest or even destroy it deserve notice.

(a) Minute sub-division of heads. It is difficult to make so many transitions or junctions as are thus required. It is only severe meditation, from which many shrink, that can fuse together ideas which, at first, are unconnected and brittle, and thus diminish the number of parts. If this is not done these parts should not be numbered. Numbers always have a chilling and an arrestive effect. Rather say : first, again, besides, moreover, further, add to this. This order should be observed. Or, if it is preferred, use the following : again, then, now, once more.

(b) Unnecessary digressions. A short digression, if an increase of power or interest is to be gained by it, is admissible. But if it is to guard against possible mistakes, or to gather flowers that do not lie in your way, or to gratify an unrhetorical propensity, it reveals the want of a high moral purpose.

(c) One-sided development of the discourse by which one Head or idea is unduly amplified, and thus the balance of the discourse is destroyed. Care must be taken to avoid this; it can be corrected only by reconstructing the sermon. It can be prevented by keeping in view, from the commencement, the proper proportion in which the various parts of the discourse should be discussed or amplified.

(d) Repetition. A thing is stated imperfectly and then corrected, or figuratively, and then in plain language, or the point of the figure is indicated, or an illustration is given which itself requires to be explained, thus leaving nothing to the intelligence or the imagina-

tion of the hearers. All these arrest progress and weary or offend hearers.

(e) Description arrests movement, as it presents an object in the relations of space, *i.e.*, simply as a substance having qualities, or pictured in the imagination as such. It belongs properly to poetry or to natural science, not to oratory. The speaker must be content to present his illustrations in profile, not in statuesque form. "The rapid, flashing metaphor is his figure." If he must describe, let him throw his description into the form of narrative. Even when parables or narratives in Holy Writ are referred to, they should be merely recalled or suggested by a word or phrase, but never repeated. What an advantage it is to a preacher to have such an abundance and variety of illustrations as are contained in the Bible, and to be able by a word or phrase to call them up and present them to his hearers. Leave description to poets and sensational preachers who address the imagination, not the conscience.

(f) Wit. "It is the destruction of affection ; it is the bent of a mind, which, instead of being carried away with the holy and the great, makes it an object of scrutiny, and entertains itself with apparent contradictions and contrasts which are contained in it." It effectually stops the current of affection, so that after it has been used, excitation has to be begun anew, if indeed it can be resumed at all. *Cicero* used it freely as a defence against a passion awakened by an opponent. But the confusion of an opponent is purchased too dear by the annihilation of all feeling in an audience.

(g) Excessive reasoning, being mainly addressed to the understanding, is unfavourable to the growth of affection. Sufficient proof must be adduced, but no

more. An orator must not reason to please his own taste or to reveal his power.

The nature and vital importance of movement can be easily seen. If you have a powerful religious truth or principle for your subject, and if it be adequately explained and proved, and if it be applied to the whole mind by proper arrangement of parts and movement, it must tend to awaken increasing interest and to lead hearers to meditate on it, and it must excite much affection, and thus influence the will and mould the disposition. Movement is thus indispensable to persuasion. It is also most natural ; hence effective speakers who know nothing of its nature, its methods or utility, aim at it, guided by an inward impulse or instinct. There was eloquence before rhetoric, as there was speech before grammar.

Section II. Adaptation. (A) *Adaptation of Discourse.*
1st. Adaptation to what is in your hearers' minds constitutionally. It is necessary to know this that the idea or theme of the discourse may be directed and attached to it. Aristotle, followed by all ancient rhetoricians, spoke of three kinds of oratory : judicial, deliberative, and panegyric, *i.e.*, laudatory. He thus recognized the fact that men, viewed merely as members of civil society, have ideas of justice, the common weal, and civic merit or honour to which persuasive discourse may be directed. Now, as man has a moral and religious nature, there must be moral and religious ideas corresponding to these—moral ideas of duty, virtue and happiness ; and, on a higher scale, religious ideas of obedience to the will of God, of acquiring holiness, and thus becoming like God, and of blessedness in the enjoyment of God's favour. These general ideas are principles of action, with one or more of which the speaker should connect

the specific idea of his discourse. If he can assimilate the object desired with these principles of action he will influence or mould his hearers from within. This is different from, and indeed directly opposed to, influencing them from without by operating on their desires and fears through their senses or imagination. For the statement of these moral and religious ideas based on Aristotle, I am indebted to *Theremin*.

These moral and religious principles of action may be presumed to exist in man's nature, which, although morally ruined, is not destroyed. However latent and feeble they may be, they must be addressed, and this will enliven and strengthen them. It is clear that if man's ruin is a moral ruin, and if the Gospel is a moral remedy, the feelings which we should seek to excite—and which alone are of any real use—are moral feelings produced by truth in the mind. *Theremin* classes moral feelings or affections under the categories already named. I condense his statement. (a) Under the head of *duty*, or obligation to do the will of God, are placed *zeal* for spiritual good, which degenerates when it seeks outward good; *shame* and *repentance* when a person has done wrong or neglected duty; and *anger* towards bad actions, which degenerates when it is directed towards a person.

(b) Under the head of *virtue* or holiness are placed *love* which has God for its highest object, and the good so far as they are like God; *friendship*, which is produced by particular moral qualities and desires fellowship with those who possess them; *emulation*, which has for its object excellence in another higher than we possess; and *admiration* which regards that excellence as almost beyond reach (c) Under the idea of *happiness* or blessedness in the enjoyment of God's favour

there are longing for the highest good ; hope to obtain it ; gratitude to him who has rendered aid in obtaining it ; pity for those who do not strive after it, or in a false way ; fear of all that would deprive us of it ; and abhorrence of evil within ourselves as the worst enemy to our happiness. Thus there are fifteen pure moral or religious affections available for persuasion. They are the highest and strongest in our nature, and they can be excited by moral and religious ideas presented to the understanding. Among them you will not find any selfish, æsthetic, or mercenary feeling.

These are all pure affections. They differ from passions mainly in three things : They are voluntary ; they are excited by moral truth, and are thus amenable to reason ; and they are, or may be, permanent.

A similar distinction between passion and affection is made by President Edwards. He says : "Affection is a word that seems to be something more than passion, being used for all vigorous or lively actings of the will ; but passion is used for those that are more sudden and whose effects on the animal spirits are more violent, the mind being overpowered and less in its own command." He also classifies affections : "From a vigorous, affectionate and fervent love to God will necessarily arise other religious affections ; hence will arise hatred and fear of sin, dread of God's disp'leasure, gratitude to God for His goodness, complacence and joy in God when He is sensibly present, grief when He is absent, joyful hope when a future enjoyment of God is expected, and fervent zeal for the divine glory. In like manner from fervent love to men will arise all the virtuous affections towards them."

Without understanding the nature of religious affections, a person, whether he preaches or acts as a

spiritual adviser, must work in the dark ; he cannot tell what kind of excitation his preaching will produce, or whether his spiritual advice will do good or harm. This is surely culpable uncertainty in an educated minister. *E.g.*, present vividly a future state of misery as one of excruciating pain and physical torment, and you may excite the passion of fear to such an extent as to produce nervous prostration, despair, or insanity. Explain the same state as one in which the soul is crushed with a load of guilt, retains its sinfulness, and is excluded from the favour of God, and you will excite the affection of fear, which is moral, voluntary, and amenable to reason, and thus prepares the soul for the reception of the moral remedy which has been provided. These feelings differ not in degree, but in kind. Hatred of physical suffering can never be so intensified as to become hatred of sin, which is an element of holiness.

You will, however, have much to do with passion, although you never purposively excite it ; and you will have to do with feelings that oppose you, and which you should know how to make subservient to your purpose, or how to destroy. The Gospel often incidentally produces passion instead of affection, on account of the sad moral state of the sinful mind. Thus you may even find passion blazing away before you begin to speak. Do not come into collision with it, as this will only intensify it. Do not destroy it, lest the subject of it sink into spiritual insensibility. Do not tell the man prostrated by the passion of fear, that his fears are groundless, that the consequences of sin are not dreadful, and that God is merciful. But stimulate his conscience by showing him that it is sin that makes him miserable ; and that God acts in conformity with His infinitely

holy nature in punishing sin ; and, further, that God has provided an atonement for sin, and also the means of sanctifying the soul. Thus, the distracting passion may be converted into a religious affection and the soul converted to God.

To convert a passion into a religious affection, you must strive to awaken the *affection that corresponds to the passion* by proceeding precisely as you would do if there were no passion present at all, *i. e.*, by applying moral or religious truth to the mind. In Luke xii, our Lord's address shows how the fear of man, that produces hypocrisy, can be suppressed by exciting the fear of God ; and how anxiety in reference to worldly things may be suppressed by trusting in God and setting the affections on spiritual and heavenly things. This is much more effectual than showing that riches make to themselves wings, etc., etc. *General Illustrations*: To produce *repentance* it is necessary to enliven the idea of *duty* by setting forth God's claims and the extent and spirituality of His law ; and by showing how His favour is to be obtained, thus connecting your subject with the 1st and 3rd classes of religious ideas referred to, thus producing " a true sense of sin and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ." To encourage Christians to maintain a conflict with sin, enliven the *idea of holiness* by showing its excellence, and by proving that by divine grace it is obtainable.

To stimulate Christians to send the Gospel to the heathen, enliven the sense of *duty* and *allegiance to Christ* ; and, to excite compassion toward the heathen, set forth the privileges, joys and hopes of true Christians. This is much more effectual than describing the degradation and misery of the heathen. *1st and 3rd Classes.*

Be careful, when necessary, to convince your hearers of the *possibility* of performing the duties which you inculcate, or of attaining the blessedness which you present. Motives are powerless when the idea of impossibility is present in the mind. Let that be removed, and the full force of motives will be felt, and the affections will awaken and exert their power.

There is no use in exciting feelings of a *purely æsthetic nature*. Feelings entirely destitute of religion may thus be awakened. Thus the description of the Lord's agony and death on the cross will produce feelings similar to those excited by the description of any great suffering. The power to convert the soul does not lie in the excruciating pain and agony of Christ on the cross, but on their moral nature as the punishment of our sins, and as the means of satisfying divine justice; and in their revealing the wonderful love of God, and the tender compassion of the Saviour.

Purely natural and social feelings may be taken advantage of to lead to serious thought, but if they are not pervaded by a moral element they are of no value. The pathetic description of a death-bed scene may awaken much feeling, and yet it may be merely fear of death and love of life, unless the connection of death with sin, and the need of mercy and of holiness to prepare for it, are clearly interwoven with it.

2. The *Subject Matter* of discourse must be adapted to the hearers. Philosophical explanation or proof is not rhetorical. Long trains of reasoning take up much time, exhaust patience, and produce such mental tension as to prevent the growth of affection. They are not suited to persuasion. True oratory does not aim at giving full information, but merely such an amount of it as is compatible with rhetorical qualities, and as may

produce the impression required. Aristotle says that the *Enthymeme* is the rhetorician's syllogism. "By this term he does not mean a syllogism with a premise or the conclusion suppressed, but the kind of proof designated Signs, *i.e.*, mainly testimony and authority."—*Sir William Hamilton*.

Now, this is precisely the kind of proof furnished by the Bible. The Gospel is addressed to us on the authority of God revealed in His Word, the only authority on which eternal life could be reasonably—or even possibly—offered to sinners, and future misery threatened; and on the authority of God revealed in the moral and religious nature which He has given us, and which is capable of responding to the presentation of the remedy, as we have seen. The authority of God is thus presented to us both objectively and subjectively: and when it is accompanied with the Holy Spirit, the highest assurance may be obtained. Thus the true believer "hath the witness in himself." John viii: 31, 32; I John v: 10. The Gospel message is divinely attested by prophecy, miracles, and the gracious and effectual influences of the Holy Spirit. Moral duties are revealed and enforced by the same authority, so that they have not to be deduced from first principles, which would be fatal to eloquence.

The suitableness of the remedy is attested by the experience of all who have truly embraced it. There is experience of its power to relieve the conscience, to purify the heart, and to form and ennable the character.

An appeal may be made to human experience in all ages, showing that all spiritually-minded persons in the Church have embraced the great doctrines of grace, and have had substantially the same religious character and experience. Church Creeds, Christian History and

Biographies amply attest these truths. You may appeal to the amount of good the Gospel has done, and the persecution and the scepticism against which it has successfully contended.

You should adapt your discourse to the moral and religious maxims, beliefs, sentiments, and even prejudices of your hearers, and even of the community at large. *E.g.*, "Man must live for something higher than himself." "Be just before you are generous." "Success is a test of merit." "It is seldom given to man to do unmixed good." "When once you begin to deviate from a rule, you will never know when to stop." "The wisdom of our ancestors." "The advantages of paternal government in the State." "The Shibboleths of religious Sects." These maxims are principles of action; if you can assimilate the subject of discourse with one or more of these, it will exert a powerful influence. There is in this *specific adaptation*. You thus manifest sympathy with your hearers' habits of thought and feeling, and incorporate your ideas with theirs. In this consists *true popularity of discourse*. You thus avoid coming into collision with sentiments and prejudices, unnecessarily, and enable your hearers to yield without undue humiliation. This sympathy with the hearers' habits of thought and feeling, is the main condition of the popularity of illiterate preachers. Educated men should not deprecate, but imitate it. As some of these maxims or prejudices may seriously obstruct discourse—the last three being fallacies—it may be necessary to remove them. But nothing less than intimate intercourse and acquaintance with persons can enable you to adapt the matter of discourse to them. In addressing a large audience, you must make the best general estimate you can. In some cases you will find

your hearers classified, as when you preach to a St. Andrew's Society, to an Orange Lodge, to a Temperance Society, or to a Y.M.C.A. In each of these, one sentiment predominates. If you connect your discourse with it, you will speak acceptably and effectively; if you do not, your discourse will be a failure, or something worse.

In addressing a worshipping assembly, we should not classify and address our hearers as believers and unbelievers, or, more properly, non-believers. This is incompatible with the idea of a religious assembly. It is also without Scripture precedent, as the Apostles in speaking and writing never seem to make this distinction. Besides, it is not called for, as conversion and sanctification are one continuous work, carried on by presenting the same Gospel truths. II Timothy iii: 15-17, Truths supposed to be specially fitted to convert sinners, are often most edifying to sincere Christians; and truths revealing Christian life and experience, have often exerted a most powerful and saving attraction on non-believers. I Cor. xiv: 24-25; Acts ii: 42-47. Moreover, it teaches hearers to classify themselves often wrongly, and to judge what in a sermon is adapted to them alone, and to give no attention to anything else. In fine, the thing is unrhetorical. It destroys the unity of the discourse, its definite aim, and especially its application.

It is important to have a clear view of the sphere in which popular proof in preaching the Gospel is to be found, of the nature of such proof, and of its adaptation to the rhetorical preaching of the Gospel, and to the generality of mankind to whom the word of salvation is sent. It should not be forgotten that in a settled and long pastorate, variety in both matter and method is

needed. Variety of matter is to be found in an extensive knowledge of Scripture. If the whole counsel of God is declared, and if doctrines and precepts are discussed *in the proportion* in which they are found in the Bible, there will be all needed, or indeed possible, variety.

Variety of method is also needed. There are expository, simple and complex methods in subjects ; there are doctrines and precepts contained in doctrinal, historic, prophetic, biographical, and also in figurative texts. "Every scribe that is instructed unto the Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old." Matt. xiii : 52.

3. The style of discourse must be adapted to the education or culture of the hearers. Language that can be easily understood and in which the Saxon element predominates, should be used. A clear vigorous style should be acquired, all dead and enfeebling words should be avoided.

Many think that they must have an elegant and highly polished style to please educated persons. But this is a remnant of the old mistake, that Rhetoric is merely the art of composition, a fine art, an elegant accomplishment. But the beauty and power of rhetorical discourse are not in words, but in sentiments. Hence, what best expresses the orator's idea, and best suits his audience, will please the most cultivated ; while anything else, no matter how beautiful it may seem in itself, will offend good taste, as much as painting a diamond or a piece of burnished gold. The words should be so adapted and subordinated to the subject as not to be noticed at all. But to smother an idea in words, or to bury it under flowers, will offend any man of common sense. Many say that anecdotes that please

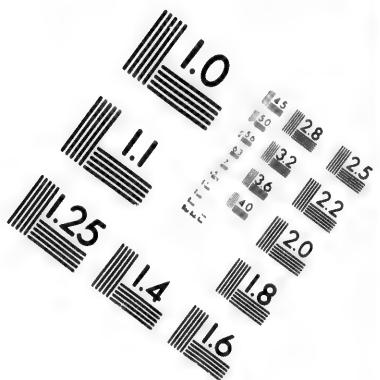
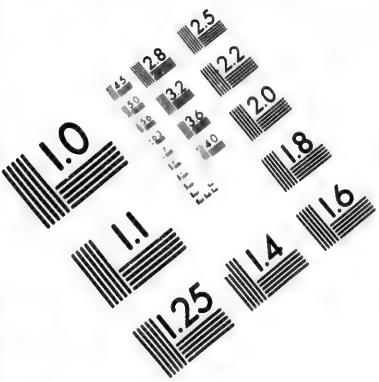
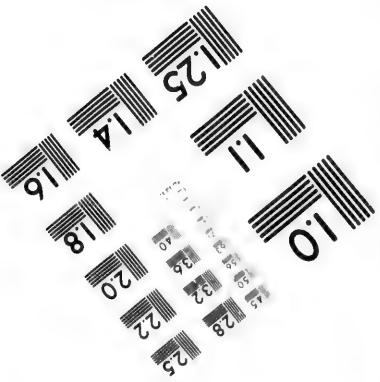
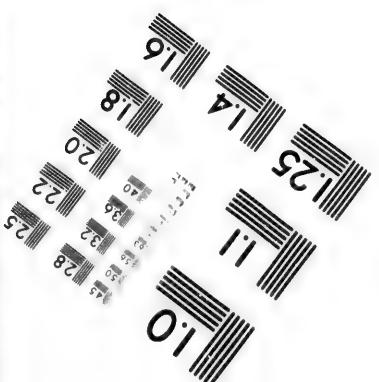
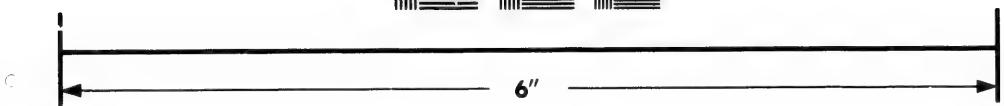
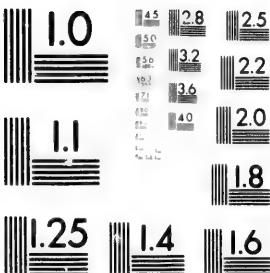


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the illiterate offend the educated. I would say : be careful not to use anecdotes freely. The man who does so feels that there is not interest in his subject ; hence, he must import it. He who trusts in anecdotes is the first to run out ; he will not last more than two years in any place.

Many find difficulty in the use of illustrations, as those that please one class may offend another. They suppose that for the generality they must borrow illustrations from the trades and occupations of daily life ; while for others they must find illustrations in history, science and philosophy. But if the true interest is in the subject, and if the illustration is merely to make that interest greater, any illustration that does this will be approved by all. Its suitableness will be felt. No more illustrations than are needed for this purpose should be used. There is great risk in borrowing illustrations from trades, etc., as one may reveal ignorance which will produce distrust of his knowledge of other matters. In scientific and philosophic references he may err, and thus defeat his purpose ; and if he does not err, he may be supposed to desire to display his own attainments, which is most damaging. Let him speak with the knowledge of his subject and the taste that an educated man only can possess, and he will edify and please all. Lord Chesterfield was right when he said, in substance, that any large audience is to be addressed as you would address the common people ; such an audience expects this ; and a lively feeling of sympathy pervading such an audience approves of it.

Bible illustrations are suited to all, and they are models which may well be imitated. The language of the Bible, which is neither learned nor vulgar, is

adapted to all; while the remedy which it reveals is suited to all; for all stand before God on the same level.

In *Rhetorical Amplification*, i.e., for the sake of impression, care must be taken to exclude or suppress anything that might check the growth of affection, and also to present illustrations in the peculiar aspects and outlines that are fitted to produce the deepest impression. Such amplification must not be incoherent, but must be based on correct analysis; and the matter must increase in interest till the crisis is reached. Care should be taken not to analyse both a desire and its object, as this would lead to repetition and confusion. There should also be in rhetorical amplification, especially at the close of a period or sermon, a good deal of vivacity combined with good taste, and a fine glow of feeling thrown into the style. It is not easy to lay down rules for this. Every man, in this delicate process, must be a law to himself. Poetry is out of place here, unless it be that of affection, and then only sparingly introduced. What are called figures of Rhetoric are more properly figures of poetry. Genuine affection, when it is kindled into a blaze, will suggest many happy turns of thought and expression. But this must not be overdone. Vulgar and faded ornaments are quite out of place here.

4. The discourse must be adapted to the hearers' circumstances and states of mind. Peculiar feelings prevail in connection with thanksgiving, humiliation, the Lord's Supper, mourning and special religious services. To these feelings, the discourse, both in matter and form, should be very carefully adapted. When this is done, such services are specially edifying and impressive. When it is neglected, want of sympathy is painfully felt, and sometimes resented.

(B) Adaptation of the Preacher to his Hearers and Subject.

1. He must be influenced by warm affection towards his hearers, and a sincere desire to promote their spiritual interests, their eternal salvation,—the most benevolent affection. He must love much if he would do much good. This feeling must be so strong as to overcome every selfish feeling, such as desire of popularity or of personal aggrandizement. Without this, he will in vain expect them to open their hearts to him. Hearers will certainly reciprocate kind feeling. Many who cannot be influenced by the most powerful arguments, may be constrained by love. 2. He must have confidence in the Gospel as the power of God unto salvation, and in the preaching of it, and in the ministry, as divinely appointed. Hesitancy due to scientific or any other difficulties or doubts, or to anxiety to find scientific support for truths which rest, and must necessarily rest, on the testimony of God, will impair the influence which the truth is fitted to exert. He should have confidence in the suitableness of his subject to secure the definite object which he has in view ; and, above all, he should have confidence in the promised aid of the Holy Spirit to give testimony to the word of God's grace. Although the absolute necessity of divine influences need not interfere with the rhetorical form of discourse, yet it should powerfully affect the preacher's mind, and lead to humble and unreserved reliance on divine grace. This will give confidence and assurance to his heart, and it will impart the accent of conviction to his words.

3. He should himself be affected by his subject precisely as he wishes his hearers to be affected by it. If he preaches repentance, he should speak as a true penitent. If he preaches faith in Christ, he should speak as one who knows in whom he has believed. If

he preaches "the terror of the Lord," it should be as one who has felt it, and has been relieved of it only by divine grace. He should be sincere and deeply in earnest; and the earnestness should be due, not to direct effort, which is always a failure, but to strong faith, and fervent love to God and man, and to a deep sense of personal accountability. He should be able to say, "*Homo sum et nihil humanum a me alienum puto.*" He must speak with affect on if he would excite affection. Thus his feelings will be natural; and they should be sincere, as this is indispensable to the excitation of religious affection. His feelings while slightly in advance of his hearers, and a little more intense, must be under due control, otherwise he will betray weakness which may excite disgust instead of sympathy. Indeed his manifestation of feeling should convey the idea of reserved force, as strongly demonstrative feeling is offensive; and as it is better that his hearers should be left to imagine the full depth of his emotion than that it should be distinctly manifested. This feeling will affect the tone of his voice and the emphasis which he places on his words; it will prevent monotony and unnaturalness; it will guide his gestures and make them not only natural, but a source of power. To speak thus he must not only have a well-constructed discourse, but he must have his mind thoroughly imbued with it, and his soul enflamed with the feelings which he wishes to glow in the hearts of his hearers. "*Si vis me flere, dolendum est sibi ipsi primum.*"

Although the various processes of invention of the subject, explanation and proof, movement and adaptation, have been viewed separately and have been discussed successively, yet in the construction of discourse they are carried on simultaneously. In inventing the

subject, you give it organic structure and definite practical direction. In arranging your matter and proof, you seek to secure movement and adaptation. In proving you may have to explain, and in explaining you may have to prove. While the interest must increase gradually until the crisis is reached, yet sufficient interest must be kept up from beginning to end to secure attention. Beauty of form and illustration must characterize, not only the main outlines, but also the subordinate parts, and minute details.

Resumé: If there be power in the subject, and if it be clearly and distinctly unfolded by correct analysis or division, and, if need be, proved ; if it be successively applied to all the parts of the hearers' minds ; if it be accurately adapted to their faculties, culture, maxims, and circumstances, and incorporated or identified with their principles of action ; and if by skilful amplification it be kept for a suitable time in living contact with their minds ; and if on the other hand, it be allowed to exert its full power on the preacher himself, revealing itself in his countenance, gestures, and tones of voice, it may be expected to influence his hearers as much as it possibly can in his hands, and to lead them to think, feel and will as he does. More than this, homiletical culture cannot aim at. God only can give effective testimony to the word of His grace, and "make men willing in the day of His power."

APPENDIX : THE EXORDIUM.

The Exordium.—This is the least important part of a discourse; for if the hearers perceive the meaning of the subject, and are prepared to give it an attentive, and also a favourable hearing, the Exordium may be dispensed with. The excellencies of introductions are mainly negative. Hence, a person is not inclined to commend a good introduction, while he is ready to condemn a bad one. An introduction is not composed for its own sake, but for the sake of the subject that it introduces. Excellence in this is mainly due to experience; beginners seldom make a good introduction, while experienced speakers seldom make a bad one. To enable you to compose a suitable introduction, you must have a distinct view of your subject, your method, and the end you wish to gain. Hence, although the introduction should be written before the sermon, yet it should not be written till you are fully prepared to write the whole sermon.

As the mind may be favourably or unfavourably disposed, either by the information it possesses or by its feelings or purpose, there are two kinds of introduction—the Explanatory and the Conciliatory.

Explanatory Introduction.—This is the easiest, most natural, and common, when a Christian congregation is addressed. 1. You may explain the connection in which the text stands, its true meaning, and its suitability to present edification. If you take only one idea out of a text in which there are several ideas, it is due to the text and to the latter that the text be explained, and that the points that you do not intend to discuss, be respectfully waived. Hence, the simple explanatory and confirmatory discourses generally require an explanatory introduction; and they will very

well bear it. If this is taken advantage of, these discourses may be as expository as is desirable. 2. You may make any critical or exegetical remarks that are needed, so that the movement of discourse may not be subsequently arrested. But these remarks must be brief, and you must not indicate, at this stage, the use you intend to make of them. 3. You may remove objections to your subject which may spring out of misapprehension of it.

Conciliatory Introduction.—This respects more the person of the speaker or hearer, and the circumstances of time and place. 1. (a) You may anticipate and remove prejudices against your theme, or your manner of treating it. (b) You may allay unfavourable feelings, and gently excite such as correspond to the spirit of your sermon. The less of a personal nature introduced the better. The preacher should introduce his subject, not himself. The ancients sought mainly to conciliate good will to themselves, to prove that they were sincere and honest, and that they had made no special preparation for speaking—and thus to allay suspicion. If a preacher is a good man he will not need to conciliate good will to himself. However, to a stranger preaching to strangers the introduction is of vital importance, as from it they will estimate his qualifications as a speaker; hence, it should be carefully prepared. 2. The style of the introduction should be clear, correct and simple. People are calm at the outset, and thus they can detect defects. It is a great matter that they should see that the preacher knows precisely what he intends to do. This will secure an attentive and respectful hearing.

3. The common faults of introductions. (1) Their length. Young preachers are afraid their matter will fail, and hence they introduce what is irrelevant. This

is a great mistake. As you can calculate on only a limited amount of patience, it is a pity to use up much of it at the beginning. (2) Their brilliancy. Fine figures and illustrations should not be placed in the introduction, as it is difficult to maintain such a style and elevation. (3) Anticipation of the sermon and its interest. The discourse may be impoverished by the introduction; and the matter, method, and design may be made so plain as to deprive the sermon of interest. (4) Irrelevant matter. If the matter be further removed from the views and feelings of the audience than the subject itself, it clearly cannot introduce the subject, but the subject might introduce it.

It is often asked when the subject should be announced. In confirmatory discourses the subject, when stated at the beginning, is called the Proposition; when stated at the end, it is called the Conclusion. It can, if need be, occupy an intermediate place. If the subject is a difficult one, it should be stated immediately after the introduction, which should prepare for it. If the subject is—although most important—very simple, it should not be emphatically stated, or it should be placed in a new point of view. If the subject is fitted to awaken hostility—even after a conciliatory introduction—it is better to state it in a general way, but not to espouse either side till after the arguments for each side have been canvassed. Special prominence should be given to points in which speaker and hearers are agreed. Even if these are not of much account, they may help to disarm prejudice and establish pleasant relations with the audience and procure a fair hearing.

In Simple Methods, the Heads should not be pre-announced, as it is not necessary, and it is fitted to anticipate interest.

The Peroration.—This is the form in which the discourse is terminated, not something added to a complete discourse. It requires earnest meditation, as much of the practical effect of the sermon depends on it. At the end of an impressive sermon the hearers are under your influence, and they expect it to be kindly exerted. If this is not done, a painful disappointment, or even shock, is felt, as if no practical effect was produced, or as if all the thought and excitation were thrown away.

General Remarks.—1st. The whole discourse should be constructed with a view to its termination. Its practical aim should secure this. It is a mistake to neglect this, or to leave it to be suggested during the excitement of delivery. 2nd. The Peroration should be directly connected with the theme of the sermon, or spring out of the very heart of it. It should be the application of the body of the sermon, its power being concentrated on one point, not the application of the last head or argument. 3rd. The Peroration should be specific, and express so accurately the spirit of the sermon that it could not properly belong to any other.

Several kinds of Peroration.—1st. There is the recapitulation of the leading arguments or heads, followed by a brief, pathetic amplification. This last should be concise and vigorous. It suits well many argumentative discourses in which the heads are not pre-announced. Their concentrated force is felt only when they are recapitulated. 2nd. There are inferences drawn from the body of the discourse. This is a natural and easy method. It is suited to very profound subjects, as the Trinity, God's eternal purposes, His omnipresence, etc., etc. The inferences must be practical and homogeneous, and unity must be carefully preserved. 3rd. There is that which consists of a direct address to

the affections, for which the whole sermon has been a preparation. This requires much taste and feeling. It is suited to discourses in which some duty is inculcated. It should not be long—in all cases tediousness and feeble repetition are to be condemned. Do not promise to conclude and after all go on till hearers are wearied. The difficulty of concluding a discourse is generally due to its faulty structure. A bad discourse is sure to retain its character to the very end. Let your last words be some sententious saying, or some carefully selected passage of Scripture.

Extemporaneous Preaching.—By this is meant preaching without writing. It is not to be mistaken for preaching without adequate preparation. As an extemporaneous sermon must be constructed on the same principles as a written one, it is not necessary to repeat these here.

General Remarks.—1. (a) In preaching extempore you must master your subject thoroughly. If you do not you will find it to be impossible to preach effectively, and to avoid serious difficulties which can be easily guarded against or quietly ignored in careful writing. (b) You must have an outline or plan as perfect as possible, and this carefully written out. Your entire reliance must be on your plan, and you must adhere to it strictly. (c) You must not only have a definite end in view to be held fast in the mind's grasp, but you must also see what should be the salient points in the sermon, so that they may be amplified, and that too, in due proportion. 2. You must have your mind thoroughly imbued with the idea of the sermon, and your heart suitably affected by it and towards your hearers. Very much depends on your state of mind at the time of preaching. No effort should be spared by earnest medi-

tation on the subject, and by fervent prayer to God, to have the mind in the best possible frame. 3. To obtain adequate resources suited to extemporaneous preaching, it will be necessary to study a great deal, to read extensively, and to acquire a relish for the illustrations of truth with which the Bible abounds. Indeed, preaching extempore tends to foster this relish, and also sympathy with our hearers.

Advantages of Extemporaneous preaching.—1. It is a splendid mental discipline, teaching you to master your subject, and to take in at one view its grand outlines in their correct and graceful proportions, with their subordinate parts, and even minute details. The educational value of this is very great, indeed, not surpassed, nor even equalled, by any other part of a liberal education. You thus acquire a kind of mental rhetoric which is independent of mechanical aid. To acquire this accomplishment alone, would more than compensate for all the time and labour spent on Systematic Rhetoric. Well did Lord Bacon call rhetoric “The crown and glory of a liberal education.”

2. The acquisition of a spoken, as distinguished from a written, style. This will greatly improve the style of your written sermons. To this distinction Cicero attaches very great importance. 3. A more easy and natural delivery, one which establishes fully sympathy between preacher and audience. 4. A far higher standard of efficiency as a preacher. Not to speak of Augustine and Chrysostom,—Luther, Calvin, Wesley and Whitefield, seem to have adopted this method. But too much importance should not be attached to these examples, as they are peculiar and exceptional. The preaching of the Fathers named was exegetical. The same may be said of the Reformers. They had to instruct the people in the Word of God

which had been long kept from them. Wesley and Whitefield were itinerants. The one said that he could not preach a year in one locality; and the sermons of the other are lacking in matter and in permanent interest. "When the great French orators, Bossuet, Fenelon, etc., preached extempore, they fell not only below themselves, but below ordinary preachers." Thus extemporaneous preaching of a high order has been attained by only a few singularly gifted men, and these, too, favoured by circumstances of time and place. Rev. A. Barnes adopted this method successfully after the sixtieth year of his age. But he had been a life-long student, and had composed commentaries on the most important parts of Scripture. H. W. Beecher also preached extempore sometimes. He advises ministers to preach a third, or at most, two-thirds of their sermons extempore, unwisely adding the words "if they can preach at all." An eloquent and able New York divine preached thus forty years ago. But he commenced his Sabbath preparations on Wednesday morning, and shut himself up the remainder of the week. N.B. It is said that preaching without writing is a great saving of time and labour. This needs qualification. It is a saving of time only because you can construct and compose your sermon when you are visiting and travelling, or performing manual labour. It is no saving of memory, as it is as difficult to remember what you have constructed in the mind as what you have written on paper. Besides, Cicero justly says that a retentive memory is indispensable to an orator. If he has this he should cultivate it; if he has it not he must acquire it. 5. Ability to speak when called on suddenly. It is damaging in such circumstances when a preacher is dumb.

Cautions.—A young minister should write one discourse a week. This will secure accuracy in thought and precision and force in expression, and facility and pleasure in writing. If a young minister adopt the extemporaneous method exclusively before he has carefully formed his style, and acquired ample information on the subject which he has to discuss, and grasp of mind and ripeness of judgment and of religious experience, he will be likely to fail entirely in the ministry. You must not expect to succeed at once. Success in this is the reward of great labour and indomitable perseverance. But the success, usefulness and pleasure attained in even a partial use of this method, will more than compensate for all the labour. “I should lay it down as a rule, admitting of no exception, that a man will speak well in proportion as he has written much; and that with equal talents, *he* will be the finest extempore speaker, when no time for preparing is allowed, who has prepared himself most sedulously when he had an opportunity of delivering a premeditated speech. All the exceptions, I have ever heard cited to this principle, are apparent ones only.” *Lord Brougham.*

Speeches connected with religious meetings are very closely related, in method and style, to extemporaneous preaching.

These speeches must have a subject. If there is not this there is nothing. But the subject should not be formally enunciated, although held fast by the speaker as his only and indispensable guide. It should be introduced in a free and informal manner. The successive parts of the speech should be gracefully rounded off somewhat like paragraphs. The junctures between them should be skilfully and gracefully made, but easily and informally. The style must have less

rigidity and more vivacity than that of the sermon. Care should be taken not to make the structure of the speech merely a frame in which a series of descriptions and anecdotes may be set. In this case, there is properly no subject, and certainly no edification. Speeches should never be made by a Christian minister merely for the purpose of excitation, like the demonstrative orations of the ancient Sophists, which brought speech making, and even rhetoric, into merited and lasting contempt. The peroration should be as easy and informal as the introduction. But it should be effective, producing a decided impression or impulse. But this must not be merely emphatic repetition. The idea may be presented in different aspects which support one another, the whole culminating in a climax of interest and power, and gracefully terminated by some sententious saying or maxim. The preceding paragraph is abridged from a book on elocution.

Studies which should be prosecuted with the view of obtaining proficiency in Religious Discourse.

1. A person should acquire a good nervous style by studying the higher grammars, by reading good authors, and by correcting severely his own compositions. I would recommend the study of Bain's Rhetoric.
2. He should thoroughly master logical concepts and the manner of discussing them in either quantity, and also the various kinds of arguments and the order in which they should be arranged with the view of excitation and persuasion. It would be useful to study McCosh's Logic, especially his discussion of concepts, which is full and clear, and also his explanation of judgments.
3. He should render himself familiar with our emotional nature, carefully distinguishing and classifying the feelings, and acquiring skill in exciting, correcting and

vitalizing them. It would be well to study Edwards on the Religious Affections, and also Sully's Outlines of Psychology. 4. He should acquire a knowledge of popular maxims, etc., etc., with the view of popularizing his preaching. This can be got only by reading current literature, associating with the people in their meetings and in their homes, and thus becoming acquainted with their habits of thought, feeling and expression.

It is matter of gratification that the study of Homiletics is now extended over the whole session. While I feel confident that sound principles of rhetoric have been explained and inculcated, yet skill in the application of these principles in the construction of discourse, has been very imperfectly acquired. Indeed, the only exercise that specially conduces to this is writing sermons and also criticizing them. This department of our work has not been so much appreciated as it should have been. A whole session might be very profitably devoted to this alone, *i.e.*, to Applied Homiletics as distinguished from Systematic Homiletics. While large portions of Scripture are in this College taught exegetically, I do not see why equally large portions should not be taught rhetorically, *i.e.*, if our design here is to make men not merely teachers, but also, and mainly, preachers of the Word.

Public Religious Service.—Unity should pervade the whole.

1. The Psalms or Hymns should be selected to suit the Sermon, especially the last one or two. 2. The portion of Scripture read should be suited to the Sermon. If remarks are made, they should be few, brief, and confined to salient points. The reading should be correct and impressive, but not such as to make elocution con-

spicuous. 3. The prayers should be generally pervaded by the same tone.

Special Remarks on Public Prayer.

(a) The divine names should be used sparingly and with the deepest reverence ; and names of attributes with strict propriety, as divine names are significant. Long sentences should be avoided. The language should be simple, modest and full of meaning. Passages of Scripture should be correctly quoted, at no greater length than is necessary ; and they should not interfere with the tenor of thought. The various topics of prayer—*e.g.*, adoration, thanksgiving, confession, intercession, and prayers for mercy, for the Holy Spirit, etc., etc.—may be differently arranged for the sake of variety ; and special amplification of topics may introduce still greater variety and stricter adaptation. Devotional ideas should be grouped under the topics to which they belong, and not be permitted to stray in confusion through the prayer. The principal prayer need not exceed five minutes. All the essential topics need not be gone over twice the same day. Prayers should be specially adapted to various occasions, *e.g.*, sacraments, marriages, funerals, etc etc. Prayers connected with the first three should be carefully written out.

(b) To acquire facility and excellence in public prayer, we should meditate on the prayers recorded in Scripture, and also on devotional sentiments ; we should addict ourselves to secret prayer ; we should, before going to church, meditate on the general plan of the prayer we intend to offer up, and seek earnestly the help of the Holy Spirit. Why should we study carefully what we intend to address to our fellow-men, and never think what we are to address to God ? If you use the

Apostolic Benediction, quote it correctly, neither adding to it nor taking from it. The full form is in II Corinthians. Never use both "communion" and "fellowship."

4. Pulpit announcements—"intimations" is not correct—should be made as brief as possible. Those generally made are too numerous and distracting; and they reveal an amount of machinery quite incompatible with the simplicity of the Apostolic Church. If such notices must be given, they should be printed with a typewriter and posted in the porch.

Unsuitable notices should be entirely rejected. Short notices of strictly religious services should be given, and also of congregational affairs; but notices of services conflicting with your own, and of persons and things that you know nothing of, should be declined.

5. Unity and the same tone should pervade the whole service. This will maintain interest and produce a decided impression. On successive Sabbaths you will thus have not only new sermons, but also new services.

NOTE: As the pulpit is the pastor's, it is his right and duty to occupy it fully.

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